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School-Based Policing in Maine: A study on School Resource Officers in Maine's public schools

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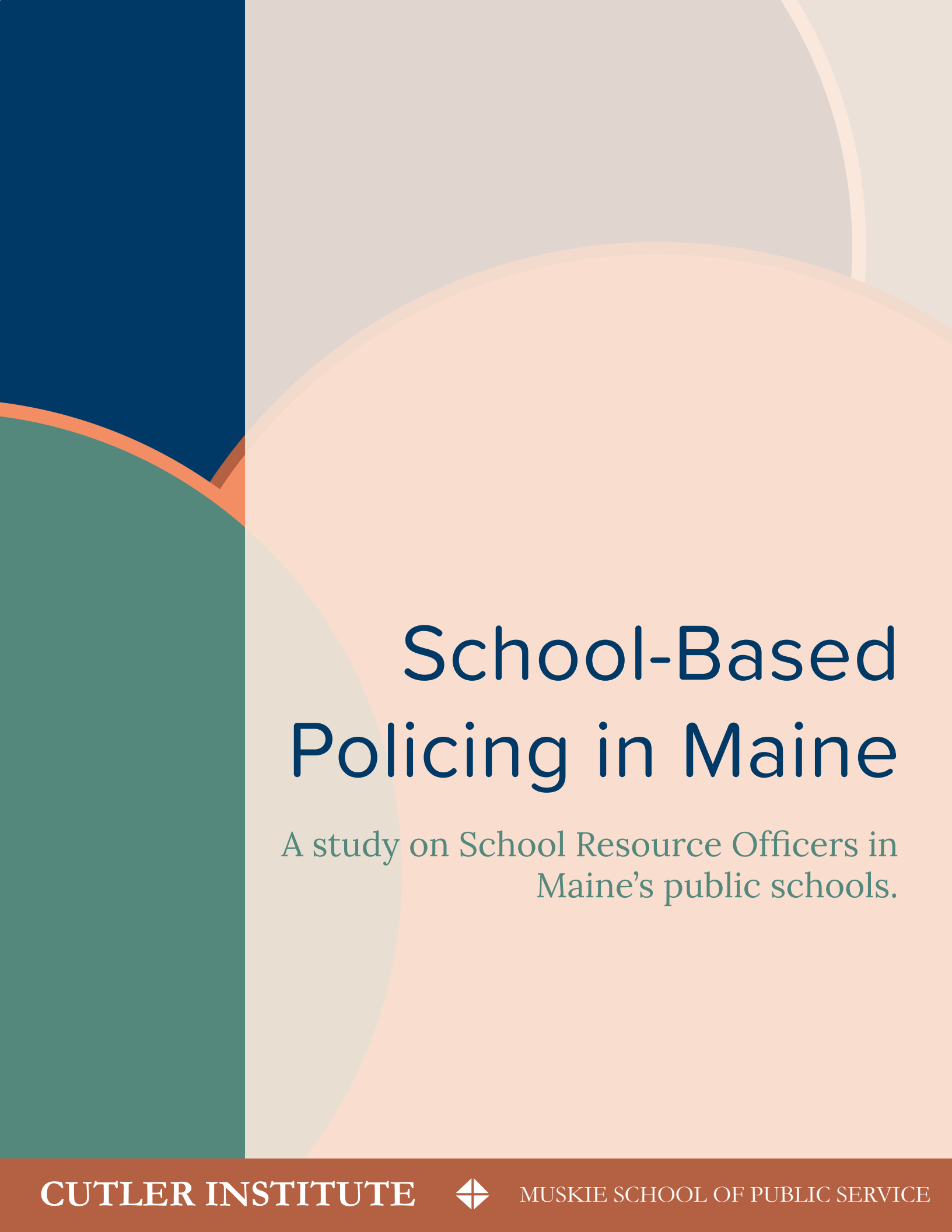
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Acknowledgements

Contents

Executive Summary

Background

As a strategy to address national concerns about school safety, school districts are increasingly partnering with law enforcement agencies to place police officers on school campuses.[1,2,3,4] School resource officers (SROs) have been defined in federal legislation as "a career law enforcement officer, with sworn authority, deployed in community oriented policing, assigned by the employing police department or agency to work in collaboration with schools and community organizations." [5]

SROs were first deployed in the United States in the 1950s in Flint, Michigan.[6] Several more SRO programs emerged intermittently over the ensuing thirty years until the 1990s when a series of bills passed by the Clinton Administration sparked a rapid expansion of the deployment of SROs nationally. The Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994 provided funds for schools to implement security measures and in 1998 the Office of Community Oriented Police Services (COPS) encouraged and funded the deployment of SROs specifically.[7] Following the 1999 school shooting at Columbine High School, the COPS In Schools Program allocated $68 million toward the expansion of SRO programs nationally.[8] The number of SROs on school campuses continued to grow over the next ten years supported by a further $905 million in federal funds.[8] After the mass shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in 2012, the Obama Administration allocated another $45 million to school-based policing.[8,9]

While the exact number of SROs since this funding boost is unknown, the School Survey on Crime and Safety found that 42% of public schools in 2015-16 employed at least one full-time or part-time SRO; looking only at public high schools with enrollment of at least 1,000 students approximately 94.4% maintain a law enforcement presence for security enforcement and patrol, and 68.5% have law enforcement maintaining school discipline.[10]

In the wake of the 2018 shooting at Marjorie Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, FL, there has again been renewed interest in deploying more SROs. In 2018 the Department of Justice allocated more than $70 million in federal grants to enhance school security,[11] and at least 26 states' legislatures directed $960 million toward school security measures.[12] In 2019 there are at least four pieces of federal legislation under consideration that would fund school-based policing programs (see Appendix A). Maine did not appropriate state funds to hire more SROs following the Parkland shooting; nevertheless, the number of SROs in Maine schools jumped from 67 to 82 between spring and fall of 2018 according to data maintained by Maine Department of Corrections (MDOC).

The program's continued proliferation nationally and in Maine, spurs the need for further research on the effectiveness of school-based policing. The key questions that need to be addressed are whether SROs increase safety—for who and at what cost. These costs include the use of limited educational funding for SROs at the expense of other school personnel, and the financial and human costs of increased school-based arrests and students' involvement in the juvenile justice system.

Purpose

Evaluation of the impacts of SROs is necessary to facilitate dialogue about whether school-based policing is a strategy that communities want to continue employing to achieve the results they are seeking. The purpose of this study is to begin examining how SRO programs are functioning in Maine public schools by offering:

- A summary of national research on documented impacts of SROs and best practices for SRO programs;
- A review of the training and policies that guide SROs' and schools' responses to students; and
- A snapshot of school-based policing in Maine from the perspectives of stakeholders who participate in the model, including SROs and police chiefs, district and school administrators, special educators, school counselors and social workers, school- and community-based diversion programs, and juvenile community corrections officers.

This study was commissioned by the Juvenile Justice Advisory Group (JJAG) to learn more about how SROs are deployed in Maine, and to understand if they are creating a culture of safety in Maine schools. This study collects existing national research on SROs, including deployment, effectiveness, impacts, and points of concern. A mixed method research design provides an overview of the program's scope and various modes of deployment in Maine's public schools.

The methodology of this report was limited in time and scope to exploring how persons directly benefitting from the involvement of SROs (primarily SROs and school administrators, along with school social workers and guidance counselors, special educators, juvenile community corrections officers, police chiefs, and diversion program coordinators) describe the functioning of their SRO program and how they perceive its effectiveness. This report does not assess the impacts of SROs on students. To truly gauge the impacts of SROs, further research needs to focus on those most impacted: students, parents, and school personnel. Only with the inclusion of these voices, as well as empirical data from law enforcement, schools, and the juvenile justice system, can a fully informed public conversation begin to address the key questions regarding deployment of SROs.

Key findings

This study is the first time Maine has taken collective stock of how schools are deploying law enforcement, and its findings are consistent with assessments of SRO programs nationally. Several key findings detailed in this report include:

1. **Policy:** There is wide variation in how Maine's SRO programs are structured and supported in policy, and as a result, schools are deploying SROs in a variety of ways.

2. **Role:** SROs are visibly present and perceived as available by students, which leads students to use them as counselors or confidantes.

3. **Training:** There are no statewide training requirements for SROs, and local training requirements or provisions for SROs vary widely.

4. **Data and Evaluation:** Data being collected on SRO activities are highly discretionary within and across sites, and insufficient for meaningful evaluation or oversight.

5. **Oversight:** There is minimal local oversight and no statewide oversight for SRO programs in Maine.

Recommendations for Maine

To encourage more unified policies and practices, statewide coordination in the deployment and conduct of SROs, as well as their evaluation, the report offers recommendations that reflect best practices in each of these areas.

1. **Offer uniform guidance in policy.**
Mandate that school districts supporting SROs operate with an up-to-date model Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that clearly outlines processes for officer selection and assessment, specifies additional specialized training for SROs, defines roles and responsibilities as well as appropriate boundaries for officer intervention, specifically addresses students' rights, identifies data to be collected, and establishes a mechanism for program evaluation and oversight.

2. **Invest in holistic school safety.**
Ensure that all schools that utilize SRO programs are also employing student support professionals in the recommended ratios to the student body (e.g. school counselors 1:250, social workers 1:250, psychologists 1:700, nurses 1:750).

3. **Standardize training requirements to reflect best practices.**
Require that all SROs receive a minimum of 40 hours of role-specific training that includes the following topics prior to starting work in a school, as well as annual in-service training:
- Students' rights and up-to-date legal information;
- Child and adolescent development and psychology, with a special emphasis on how exposure to trauma affects students ability to learn and regulate their behavior;
- Positive and developmentally appropriate behavioral interventions, or those strategies that effectively teach, model, and support student behaviors that promote a safe and positive school environment;
- Conflict resolution, peer mediation, and restorative justice techniques;
- How to work with children with disabilities and special needs;
- Cultural competence, or a recognition, understanding, and appreciation for the distinct cultural groups represented at schools; and
- Knowledge about community-based resources to help students and families and how to make referrals.

4. **Collect common data metrics to facilitate evaluation.**
Mandate that all SRO programs collect and report common metrics to enable evaluation of the program's impact on school safety and student well-being at local and state levels. At a minimum, metrics should include:
- Number of times that SROs handcuffed, restrained, or summoned students on campus and the basis for each incident;
- Number of court referrals by SROs; and
- Arrests of students made by SROs: disaggregated by school site, offense, disposition of the matter, and student demographics, including age, race, ethnicity, student English Learner status, foster youth status, gender, disability, whether the student has an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or Section 504 Plan.

5. **Involve stakeholders in program oversight.**
Form oversight boards at local and state levels to provide input, review program data, and monitor SRO impacts on youth outcomes. Stakeholders providing oversight should include of students, parents, community-based organizations, children's mental/behavioral health providers, and youth advocates.

6. **Conduct further research focusing on:**
- The actual costs of providing SROs in schools in Maine;
- The cost of providing the non-law enforcement services that are currently being provided by SROs (counseling, mediation, managing non-criminal student behavior) by other professionals trained in those areas; and
- Perspectives from other stakeholders including parents, students, child advocates, and defense attorneys.

Research Methods

The current study seeks to describe the functioning of SROs in Maine's public schools using a mixed-method research design involving surveys and interviews of system stakeholders. The surveys and stakeholder interviews were conducted in two phases:

Phase I: SROs and school superintendents were surveyed to assess functions of SROs in Maine, how those are determined and by whom, and the training requirements for SROs beyond basic police training;

Phase II: Group interviews of a convenience sample of system stakeholders were conducted to gain deeper understanding of the partnerships, policies, and procedures that affect SRO involvement in Maine's public schools.

Phase I: Surveys

Two surveys (see Appendix E) were developed by researchers at the Muskie School with input from stakeholders at Maine Department of Education (MDOE), Maine Department of Corrections (MDOC), an SRO, a juvenile prosecutor, a school superintendent, and a restorative justice practitioner. One survey was sent to the 67 SROs that were currently known to be working in Maine as of July 2018, and the other survey was sent to the 250 superintendents listed with MDOE, some of whom have SROs working in schools in their respective districts. An email was also sent to all Maine police chiefs explaining the study and alerting them to the survey being sent to SROs. Both surveys were conducted using SNAP survey software[13] and distributed via email. Preliminary survey results were collected and analyzed after two weeks for presentation at the 2018 Maine Forum for Education and Justice System Partnership. Both surveys remained open for four weeks, with recipients receiving three follow-up emails, and three rounds of follow-up phone calls if they had not yet responded. In the course of following up on survey responses, the number of superintendents was found to be 248 and the list of SROs was updated to 71.

The two surveys received responses from 75% of SROs (N=53) and 55% of superintendents (N=136). The responses from SROs indicate that there are at least 71 SROs working in at least 49 (28%) of Maine's 174 school districts:

- Of the 53 SROs who responded **37 (71%)** were **covering multiple campuses.**
  - Of those covering multiple campuses, 16 SROs (43%) reported spending most of their time in the high school and visiting the other schools regularly or as needed.
- **12 (23%)** SROs were deployed full-time in **high schools,**
- **2 (4%)** full-time in **elementary schools,** and
- **1 (2%)** full-time in a **middle school**
- **15 SROs (29%)** reported **doing other police work** in addition to their school-based duties, and 9 of these officers (17% of all SROs) regularly returned to patrol work during school vacations.

Of the 136 school administrators responding to the survey, 49 reported that they have an SRO in their district, suggesting that most superintendents with an SRO in their district responded to the survey. Because the survey could be delegated to another administrator, respondents for the superintendents' survey were identified as 82% superintendents, 9% principals, and 9% another role.

Phase II: Stakeholder interviews

Between October 2018 and February 2019, group interviews of system stakeholders were held in five sites throughout Maine to gain deeper understanding of the partnerships and policies that govern SROs' role, selection, training, deployment, decision-making processes for handling school-based incidents, and what data are collected and used to facilitate evaluation and oversight of the SRO program. Sites were selected from each of the three MDOC regions. Site selection was further guided by the availability and interest on the part of SROs and school district administrators in each area. To obtain leadership buy-in and participation, researchers contacted superintendents and police chiefs by email to explain the purpose and process of the current study.

Group interviews took place in Falmouth and Sanford from MDOC Region 1, Augusta and Lewiston from MDOC Region 2, and Old Town from MDOC Region 3. The following 48 system stakeholders participated in group interviews throughout the five sites:

- **6 district superintendents and assistant superintendents,**
- **10 school principals and assistant principals,**
- **5 police chiefs,**
- **7 SROs and 1 supervisor of SROs,**
- **5 school-based mental/behavioral health** (guidance counselors and social workers),
- **5 special education department heads**,
- **3 school-based and community-based diversion program coordinators**,
- **5 juvenile community corrections officers** (JCCOs),
- **1 assistant district attorney** (ADA)

The interview tool (see Appendix F) was adapted from an interview tool used by National Institute of Justice (NIJ) researchers facilitating school-police partnership focus groups throughout the country. The interview tool received comment from area stakeholders. The interview questions covered school-based discipline and matters involving SROs, communication and information sharing, data tracking and use, training, and general comments about the strengths and needs of Maine's SRO programs.

Constraints on the study limited the investigators' ability to conduct surveys and interviews of other stakeholders. To provide a more comprehensive portrait of the impacts of SROs, further research with system stakeholders should test whether the perspectives of these stakeholders hold true for those in other jurisdictions. And most importantly, future studies should pursue input from stakeholders not included in this study, namely students, parents, youth advocates, and school staff.

About This Report

The following results include 1) an overview of existing research regarding SROs, 2) quantitative data gathered from the two surveys conducted in July 2018, and 3) qualitative data gathered from the five sites interviewed between October 2018 and February 2019.

Reviewing the Research on SROs

Lack of Policy Guiding SRO Deployment

While school-based policing has become commonplace at campuses across the country, there is no centralized or continuous tracking of how many schools use SROs, no national governance of SROs' roles and training requirements, and only *ad hoc* evaluation of their effectiveness in improving school safety.[14] Local law enforcement agencies deploying SROs are not required to register with any national database, and school systems are not required to report how many SROs they use. The National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO) estimates there are between 14,000 and 20,000 SROs deployed in schools nationwide.[15] The National Center for Education Statistics found that 42% of all public schools in 2015-16 employed at least one full-time or part-time SRO, and that 94.4% of public high schools with enrollment of at least 1,000 students maintained a law enforcement presence for security enforcement and patrol.[10]

Similarly in Maine, neither schools nor police departments have been required to report whether they deploy SROs. Since 2014, MDOC has maintained an unofficial list of SROs. As of the fall of 2018, this list included 82 SROs working in more than 93 schools in 49 districts. This was likely an undercount as SROs do not report to MDOC and were not required to register themselves on any list of SROs. Starting in the 2018-19 school year, MDOE began asking schools to report SROs deployed on their campuses in its data reporting system.

The SRO program operates under general guidance from the legislation that facilitated its creation and expansion, but it is largely the discretion of local law enforcement and education agencies that determines the scope of the position based on the priorities of the jurisdiction. In most cases, school districts work with local law enforcement (e.g. municipal law enforcement agencies or county sheriff's offices) to determine the roles and requirements for the SRO position, as well as how the cost of the position will be borne between the two departments. The most common roles for SROs endorsed by NASRO as the "triad concept" or "three legged stool" include law enforcer, educator, and mentor.[15,16,17,18,19,20,21,22] As law enforcers, SROs patrol assigned areas, investigate criminal activity and make arrests or referrals to appropriate services. As educators, SROs may teach classes on a variety of topics such as drugs and alcohol, self-defense, safety and violence prevention, or law and the criminal justice system. As counselors or mentors, SROs assist students and families with law-related matters, which can be both effective and problematic regarding students' due process rights.[7,8]

In the absence of national policies detailing SROs' specific roles, these obligations are sometimes, but not always, clarified in a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) executed at the local level between the law enforcement agency and the superintendent of the public school system. As with the lack of consistent policies guiding what roles SROs will play, it is rare to find formal selection criteria or evaluation processes involving schools and student advocates to participate in the recruitment and selection of SROs. Some states have addressed the lack of consistent policies guiding local SRO programs by passing legislation to mandate that all jurisdictions use a standard MOA. In 2018, Massa-

Best Practices

GUIDING SRO PROGRAMS IN POLICY

In 2019, Nebraska enacted legislation to create a model MOA by the end of the year that must be adopted by any schools employing SROs and police departments deploying law enforcement to schools unless they already have an MOA in effect that addresses the minimum standards put forth by the state's model MOA.[24] The legislation specified certain issues that the MOA must address:

1. **Training**: All SROs, school security guards, at least one school administrator, and at least one teacher are mandated to attend a minimum of 40 hours of training focused on school law, students' rights, understanding special needs students and students with disabilities, conflict de-escalation techniques, ethics for SROs, asolescent brain development and behavior, diversity and cultural awareness, trauma-informed responses, and preventing violence in school settings.
2. **Data**: Records must be kept regarding each student referral for prosecution by an SRO. At a minimum, records must include the reason for the referral, if the incident prompting referral took place at school or at a school event, and student demographic characteristics including, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, grade level, and whether the student has an identified disability.
3. **Students' rights**: Directs when and how parents/guardians are to be notified, in a language that they understand, and given reasonable opportunity to be present if their student is subjected to questioning or interrogation by a school official, SRO, or security guard operating in conjunction with a school official.
4. **Due process**: Under what circumstances students are to be advised of their constitutional rights prior to being questioned or interrogated by a school official or SRO.
5. **School discipline vs law enforcement response**: Distinguishes the type or category of student conduct or actions will be referred to law enforcement for prosecution, and what type of student conduct or actions will be resolved as a disciplinary matter.
6. **Grievance**: What complaint process will be available to students and parents related to the practices of the SRO, school district, and/or law enforcement agency.

chusetts published a standard MOA that must be adopted by schools and police departments deploying SROs (see Appendix D).[23]

Where roles delegated to the SRO are not clearly spelled out in an MOA, or where no MOA exists between the partnering systems, the boundary of SROs' roles are more dependent on the skills and preferences of the individual officer, the extent to which an officer has received specialized training beyond basic police training, and the directives the officer receives from the school.[7,16,17] The role the SRO plays impacts what kind of interactions that SRO will have with students, and what outcomes students will likely have in that school setting. A key missing link in many school systems involving SROs is the absence of clear guidance about how school personnel and SROs should communicate, and when it is appropriate to involve SROs in issues involving student behaviors. Poorly defined SRO roles often lead to school administrators using SROs to address problems that school staff have not been otherwise able to handle, and in many cases leads to the use of SROs for purposes that are antithetical to the interests of students.[8]

Student misbehavior that could be handled through school disciplinary channels versus matters that merit law enforcement intervention are often unclear. For this reason, some states have statutorily determined which behaviors require arrest. *Maine has not taken this step.* Therefore, factors that determine who is involved and what outcome is reached depends on the discretion of school administrators and SROs, and less on agreed upon approaches to student behavior. Officers' propensity toward arrest or diversion, how the youth's demeanor is perceived, school administration's directives, and the availability of alternative means for addressing problem behavior (e.g. Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports or restorative justice) are among the key factors that determine these outcomes.[25]

Researchers and experts recommend crafting clear and strong MOAs that require comprehensive training; establish frequent communication between cross-system partners; address how responsibilities will be divided between SROs, school administrators, and teachers; and mitigate the potential for violating students' rights to privacy.[7]

The President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing issued the recommendation that law enforcement agencies and schools establish MOAs that clearly limit police involvement in student discipline, and work together to create a continuum of developmentally appropriate and proportional consequences to address student misbehavior without police involvement (see Appendix C).[26] Echoing the Task Force's recommendations, the first principle for SRO program implementation recommended in Georgetown Law's SRO toolkit (see Appendix B) is to clearly prohibit SROs from enforcing disciplinary policy, and for system partners to meet regularly to review compliance with their MOA.[27]

The lack of consistent policy governing the training, deployment, and boundaries of SROs in Maine speaks to the absence of statewide standards for law enforcement interactions with youth. In the absence of federal standards for how law enforcement interact with youth, few states have set regulations or created advisory committees to guide or monitor police-youth contact.[28] While most professionals who regularly interact with youth are held to clear standards that are set by the state and informed by multidisciplinary experts, this has not been the case for police.[28] The lack of such standards for law enforcement, and particularly for SROs who interact with youth daily, can lead to differences in how police respond to youth behavior across and within jurisdictions, which can contribute to disparities in the juvenile justice system when some youth are treated more or less punitively based on geography.

Necessity of Specialized Training

SROs are first and foremost law enforcement officers, and the initial training they receive for this role may or may not include working with youth in school settings. A 2013 survey of police training programs found that 1% of basic training for police cadets is spent on juvenile justice issues, and this training focuses more on the juvenile code rather than best practices and practical skills for understanding and working with youth.[29] Recognizing that policing young people at school puts officers in a unique and delicate position, the Obama Administration refined the 1968 definition of SROs as "specially trained police officers...equipped with proper training and supported by evidence-based school discipline policies."[7] Despite this revision, there are no standard training requirements for SROs.[30,31] While NASRO recommends SROs receive 40 hours of role-specific training, only four states (Massachusetts, Texas, Colorado, and Nebraska) require SROs to have role-specific training before beginning work in school settings.[32]

Surveys of SROs nationally suggest that when SROs do receive additional training, this training is most likely to be related to responding to active shooters rather than topics related to understanding and interacting with youth. Nationally, many more SROs report having training in active shooter response (93%) than working with youth (74%), working with special education students (54%), child trauma (39%), or the teenage brain (37%).[33] In districts that do not require additional training for SROs, officers must rely on their basic police training, which emphasizes detecting criminal activity and making arrests when there is probable cause, and where adolescents are often treated as "mini-adults" with the same capacity for weighing

Best Practices

SRO TRAINING

Comprehensive training for SROs as well as for the school communities they serve is a common recommendation of researchers and experts.[7,14,15,29,30,35] In its 2014 report Law Enforcement's Leadership Role in Juvenile Justice Reform, the International Association of Chiefs of Police emphasized that for SROs to succeed in their primary purpose of keeping kids in school, there is a need for cohesive SRO training programs that equip officers with an understanding of adolescent development, cultural differences among youth and how to minimize disproportionate minority contact, mental health and trauma issues, and effective strategies for youth engagement, intervention and crisis response.[36] To address this need, research recommends:[7,30]

- 40 hours of specialized training in specific topics prior starting work in a school, and
- 10 hours of continuing training each year.

Training requirements should be mandated at the state level, or else specified in each jurisdiction's MOA. In 2014 the U.S. Department of Education recommended requiring training for SROs in the following key topics:[7]

- Students' rights and up-to-date legal information,
- Child and adolescent development and psychology,
- Positive and developmentally-appropriate behavioral interventions, or those strategies that effectively teach, model, and support student behaviors that promote a safe and positive school environment,
- Conflict resolution, peer mediation, and restorative justice techniques,
- How to work with children with disabilities and special needs,
- Cultural competence, or a recognition, understanding, and appreciation for the distinct cultural groups represented at schools, and
- Knowledge about community-based resources to help students and families and how to make referrals.

consequences and developing intent as adults.[34] **Policing schools without specific training on working with youth leads to criminalizing misbehavior and pushing young people out of school.[31]**

Maine does not have a statewide training requirement for SROs. While the Maine Criminal Justice Academy provides four hours of training to cadets in juvenile justice issues (0.6% of total basic training hours), this training is not required by statute.[28] The four-hour segment dedicated to juvenile justice training does not include discussion of normative adolescent development and psychology, the role of trauma on the capacity to learn and students' behaviors, mental health issues, decision-making and teen group dynamics, cultural influences, reducing disproportionate minority contact, or skills for law enforcement to assert authority effectively with youth.[29] Mental health experts are involved in Maine's curriculum development and training, and there is a separate eight-hour section of training on mental health which includes material on juveniles.

In short, most of Maine's SROs are placed in the state's public schools with little training on best practices for interacting with students, and no training on the key issues facing officers deployed in schools. The state leaves local school districts and/or police departments to decide what additional training, if any, SROs will have.

Depending on how police departments structure the SRO program, the amount of on-the-job experience that SROs accumulate also varies. Departments that encourage officers to self-select into the position and incentivize their staying in the position allow SROs to accumulate role-specific training complemented by on-the-job experience. Conversely, departments that rotate the SRO position among officers are unlikely to invest in adequate SRO-specific training for each new officer, and this rotating model prevents SROs from accumulating ex-

perience working with youth and from fostering ongoing relationships between the partnering system players. While the self-selection approach avoids deploying officers with no interest in the SRO position, it is important that selection criteria focus on officer suitability rather than seniority, meaning that candidates must demonstrate the desire, temperament, and relevant training to work with youth (see Appendix D for sample selection criteria). The wide variation in specialized training and on-the-job experience among SROs can contribute to inequities for student safety and exposure to the criminal justice system.

In addition to training for SROs, school staff and administrators also need training on the roles encompassed by the SRO and how to appropriately partner with law enforcement in the school setting. Teachers and administrators are not trained about how and when they should request assistance of the SRO, what kind of matters should be resolved with a school response as opposed to a law enforcement response. Nor are school personnel clear on how the involvement of SROs increases contact with the juvenile justice system and school-based arrests.[37] School personnel are often unaware that officers' use of discretion may result in law enforcement responses when school personnel had hoped only a good "talking to" would be invoked.

In addition to understanding the scope of the legal and informal roles of SROs, school staff should be trained on laws protecting students' rights to privacy and confidentiality, so as not to share educational and disciplinary records that SROs would not have access to unless they are made an administrator of the school or have parental permission in a particular student's case.[7]

Impacts on Vulnerable Youth

SROs are gatekeepers to the juvenile justice system. Depending upon how they are deployed, SROs can actually reduce school-based arrests compared to when schools rely on a "call for service" use of law enforcement.[25] However, youth are still more likely to come in contact with the criminal justice system when there is an officer at school, and this can have negative outcomes for their educational attainment and school connectedness.[30,31,38,39,40]

There has been a sharp increase in juvenile arrests since the deployment of SROs. This effect is especially pronounced for students of color, students with learning disabilities, and students from other vulnerable populations who may be socially marginalized or economically disadvantaged.[8,9,41,42,43,44,45] Interactions with law enforcement at school can be an alienating and humiliating experience for students. The ACLU found that schools with police presence report 3.5 times as many arrests as schools without police presence.[8,9] Students who are arrested in high school are three times as likely to drop out, students who appear in court during high school are four times as likely to drop out, and students who drop out of high school are eight times more likely to end up in the criminal justice system.[38,43]

Research surrounding the impact that SROs have on students' perception of safety is likewise limited and mixed.[2,6,46,47] Visible security measures such as metal detectors, cameras, and security guards have been shown to decrease students' perceptions of safety, although there are differences between groups as to which security measures contribute to heightened fear at school.[48,49,50,51,52,53] A prominent police presence in the general community has been shown to heighten the perception of vulnerability by some,[54,55] and this effect also occurs in school communities, espe-

cially for students who come from communities that have been over-policed or victimized by the criminal justice system.[6,56,57]

Studies have found that SRO presence in schools is negatively associated with students' feelings of safety in school.[7,58] Other research has found that the frequency and quality of interactions that students have with SROs impacts how positively students view SROs, but does not impact how safe they feel on campus.[6] Students' feelings of safety when there is an SRO on campus vary widely based on factors such as students' race,[6,52,56] gender,[52,59] age,[57] grade point average,[52,53,57] and frequency of interaction with SROs.[6,60]

Race is a critical factor in who perceives school to be safer with SROs present.[27,56] Communities of color are over-policed, and people of color experience far worse treatment by police and receive harsher consequences from encounters with the justice system. While SROs are deployed as part of community-oriented policing, it is important to note that the SRO program's rapid proliferation in the 1990s began before the shooting at Columbine High School, fueled by the "superpredator" narrative of the "tough on crime" era that primarily villainized youth of color.[61,62] SROs have been disproportionately hired by schools where the student body is predominantly comprised of youth of color.[31,56,63,64,65]

Black students are three times more likely than white students to be arrested at school, though in some states they are eight times as likely to be arrested as their white peers.[45] For girls, these racial disparities are even more pronounced: Black girls are four times more likely than white girls to be arrested, and in some states they are more than eight times as likely to be arrested.[45]

Research has shown that while students across all racial groups experience a level of perceived vulnerability at school,

Black and Hispanic students feel more vulnerable in the classroom, and their White and Asian peers feel more vulnerable in hallways, bathrooms and locker rooms.[56]

It is particularly important for schools deploying SROs to consider that youth of color, girls of color, and youth with disabilities have been disproportionately impacted by the presence of police in their schools, which contributes to their feelings of vulnerability around SROs in their schools. In 2014 President Obama commissioned the Task Force on 21st Century Policing in response to communities' distrust of law enforcement, exacerbated by instances of police brutality and fatal shootings of people of color.[26] Among its recommendations for building trust and improving community-police relations, the task force specifically addressed practices to interrupt the school-to-prison pipeline by minimizing law enforcement's involvement in student discipline and moving away from zero-tolerance policies that have disproportionately impacted youth of color (see Appendix C).[66]

Echoing the Task Force's recommendation to provide SROs with special training to help them better understand and respond to youth, one of the key principles of practice that Georgetown Law outlines in its toolkit for SROs (see Appendix B) is providing officers with training on racial and gender bias, and approaches that are culturally competent, trauma-informed, and gender-responsive.[27] In addition to this specific training, it is suggested that schools routinely collect and review data on their SRO program's impact on vulnerable students, and actively seek input from students and families about how the program is working from their perspective.

While this study does not encompass the experiences that students and families have had with SROs, it is key that the public conversation on the benefits and risks of SRO involvement in Maine

schools include these voices. For a robust public conversation that considers all facets of SRO involvement, these voices are critical to a complete understanding of the role of SROs and how they are used.

Respecting Students' Rights

There is an inherent conflict in some of the roles played by an SRO. The SRO is first and foremost a police officer whose duties include the identification and investigation of behavior that violates the law. However, SROs are also tasked with building positive relationships with students. Their consistent presence on school campuses and their visibility to students in common spaces encourages students to view them as available to talk to. In addition to being visibly present and available, SROs frequently take on other roles with students such as coaching school sports teams.

As a result, students may come to see the SRO as a trusted adult, confidante, coach, mentor, and role model. These perceptions of SROs lead to students failing to grasp that SROs are sworn officers whose priority is to identify and respond to illegal activity, and who are equipped with the power to arrest. When students are encouraged to see the SRO as a trusted adult in their school with whom they can discuss problems at school, at home and in the community, there is a substantial risk that the student will share information that would be related to criminal behavior by the student, their family, or their friends.

That risk is further magnified when there is no notice to the particular student, or to the student body at large, that the SRO may not keep confidential information shared by a student. Furthermore, the students who are most likely to seek out this support may be the most vulnerable students who are most in need of a trusting relationship with an adult. Not only can it lead to a violation of a student's constitutional rights if any information shared with the SRO is used as a basis for a juvenile prosecution,[67] but it can also leave the student exposed to retribution from peers or family members that may have been compromised by the student's statements.

With SROs embedded into the school community, school staff may also forget that SROs are first and foremost law enforcement. School personnel who regularly encounter SROs as colleagues may fail to appreciate the potential risk to students when SROs are involved in discipline or teachable moments, or when they are acting as counselors and mentors. Even in jurisdictions that have an MOA between the school district and law enforcement agency, it is often unclear when an SRO may be involved in assisting with student behavioral issues, when an SRO may question a student, and when students need to be advised of their *Miranda* rights and/or have a parent/guardian present.[31] Without clear policies on how school and law

Best Practices

STUDENTS' RIGHTS

To safeguard students' constitutional rights, schools and law enforcement agencies need clear policies outlining when an SRO may be involved in or present for a student being questioned, when students must be advised of their rights, and when a student must have a parent/guardian present. The ACLU recommends written policies for SRO programs should include:[31]

- Clear delineation of SRO roles to avoid confusion on the part of students and school personnel about the SRO's primary responsibility as a sworn police officer,
- Language requiring that students be warned in developmentally appropriate language of their right to remain silent whenever they are being questioned about behavior that may have broken the law,
- Circumstances in which a parent/guardian must be notified and given an opportunity to be present before a student is questioned or searched, and
- Language prohibiting police questioning of students younger than 12 years of age without a parent or guardian present.

enforcement responses will ensure that students' rights are upheld, schools often involve SROs in matters that they see as potential violations of both school rules and the law.[31] School administrators and SROs questioning students in these situations is problematic for the student as non-compliance may prompt negative consequences from the school, while compliance with the questioning may initiate legal trouble.

When students are suspected of breaking a law and the SRO is involved, students have the right not to answer questions.[67] However, when students see the SRO as a familiar figure on campus or are intimidated by the SRO as an authority figure, they may not feel free to end a conversation with the SRO and may say things that trigger serious consequences.[68,69]

Evaluating Effectiveness

There is limited evidence of the effectiveness of the SRO program improving school safety, and the existing research reveals mixed findings regarding both the impact of SROs on school safety and perception of school safety.[6,31,34] The lack of standard roles and requirements for SROs and the inconsistency of policies, practices, and priorities from one district to the next present inherent challenges to cross-site evaluation.

Research has indicated that schools with SROs are more likely to have in place an emergency operations plan (EOP), or a protocol for violent intruders or other active threats, and to have trainings and drills to prepare for these situations. On the other hand, studies report mixed findings regarding the impact of SROs on reducing violence in schools, both low-level and more serious violence. Some research has found the presence of SROs to be associated with a decrease in assaults[70] and a decrease in serious violence.[71] Meanwhile, other studies looking specifically at school violence have found that SROs are not associated with a decrease in non-serious violent incidents[71] and that schools with SROs did not have less reported serious violent or non-serious violent crimes when examined in a longitudinal design.[72]

Regarding the impact that the SRO program has on increased youth contact with law enforcement and consequent legal repercussions, few schools collect any data on officer activities or student arrests.[31] Some studies find that the presence of an SRO increases the likelihood that crime will be detected.[65,72] A study in West Virginia observed this increase in crime detection (specifically the number of reported drug crimes), as well as an increase in out-of-school suspensions, but also noted that SRO presence enduring over several years was associated with a decrease in violent crime and incidents of disorder.[34] While there is inadequate data gathered by schools and law enforcement about how often SROs are referring students to the legal system, studies find that the expansion of the SRO program has coincided with a dramatic increase in the number of youth in the juvenile justice system for misdemeanor offenses (such as school fights and disorderly conduct). [8,40,73,74,75]

With the presence of SROs in schools, developmentally normal adolescent behaviors previously handled through school disciplinary channels have increasingly been labeled criminal, thereby justifying law enforcement responses by SROs. A wide range of non-compliant behaviors displayed by students may be labeled as "disorderly conduct" or "disrupting a school," which transfers the responsibility for responding to the behavior from the school to law enforcement. With this shift in how student behavior is viewed, labeled, and dealt with, there has been a dramatic increase in youth referred from the school to the legal system

on charges of disorderly conduct. Research has found that even when controlling for schools' level of economic disadvantage, schools with SROs have five times more arrests for disorderly conduct than schools without SROs.[8,76] To interrupt this pattern of criminalizing disruptive student behavior, or behavior that can fall into the catch-all category of "disturbing a school assembly," some states are directing schools to use MOAs to expressly limit or prohibit SROs from using "disorderly conduct" or "disturbing a school" charges to address student behavior (see Appendix D).

Consistent with the challenges to evaluating SRO effectiveness and impacts nationwide, the dearth of empirical data in Maine, the lack of statewide oversight or data collection, and this study's limited access to school arrest rates, demographics and dispositions of students arrested in schools, our ability to truly measure the impacts of SROs in Maine's public schools is currently limited.

SROs in Maine

Purpose of SROs

SROs surveyed in this study overwhelmingly ranked their top priorities as 1) active shooter preparedness and 2) building positive relationships with students. School administrators generally prioritized the same roles, favoring positive relationships with students slightly more.

Funding

The cost of an SRO position entails more than the officer salary, which in Maine ranges between $50,000 and $60,000 based on location and number of years in police service. Funding an SRO involves paying their salary, benefits, police vehicle, equipment such as uniforms and weapons, and additional training in jurisdictions that require or offer role-specific training.[77] Including these expenses, national research finds that the actual cost of an SRO is closer to $100,000.[77,78]

Most SRO positions in Maine are funded collaboratively between the school and police departments. Almost half (44%) of SROs surveyed reported that their position is fully supported (32%) or mostly supported (12%) by the police department, while most others reported their positions are mostly funded (32%) or fully funded (10%) by the school. The remaining SROs reported that their salaries were shared between both departments equally (14%) or grant-funded (2%). School administrators with SROs reported similarly, with more saying that the cost of the position was shared equally rather than fully funded by the police department. In group stakeholder interviews, several sites mentioned that the position was originally grant-funded. One site where the SRO program was still supported by grant funds expressed hope that the program would continue to be funded through the local police and school budgets. In sites where the position was already being funded locally, participants talked about the position being shared between the police department and school budgets.

Memoranda of Agreement

Three-quarters (75%) of SROs and nearly two-thirds (64%) of school administrators surveyed reported having an MOA between the police and school departments. Four out of the five sites interviewed have an MOA. 13% of SROs and 30% of school administrators reported they have no MOA. 12% of SROs and 6% of school administrators reported being unsure whether they had an MOA.

Most commonly, surveyed stakeholders reported that superintendents and police chiefs were the key stakeholders involved in crafting and signing these agreements. Other partners frequently mentioned by surveyed stakeholders included other law enforcement officers, principals, attorneys, school board members, town managers, and guidance counselors.

Officer Selection

In stakeholder interviews across all five sites, participants repeatedly comment-ed that officer choice, or self-selection, is an important feature of successful SRO programs. While training is important for all officers assuming a post in school set-tings, allowing officers to choose the SRO position increases the chances of their building partnerships and being a positive presence within the school. One police chief remarked,

"Selection of the individual who goes into the position. No different than the K-9 police position ... The individual you select to go into your schools makes or breaks that partnership. If there was any advice I could give, don't force someone to take that position if they don't want it ... you've got to get the right person."

The two most common reasons participants mentioned that motivate officers to take an SRO position when one becomes available were: 1) enjoying working with youth, and 2) the SRO position guarantees day-time shifts and most weekends off.

Work experience and life experience were mentioned as necessary complements to training for SROs. One officer who has not only been in the SRO position for sev-eral years but also on the police force for many years said,

"I can definitely see how experience in police work and just life, not necessarily police work but experience in life, too, helps me. I look back at some of the ways I might have reacted to stuff when I was a lot younger and now I handle complete-ly different."
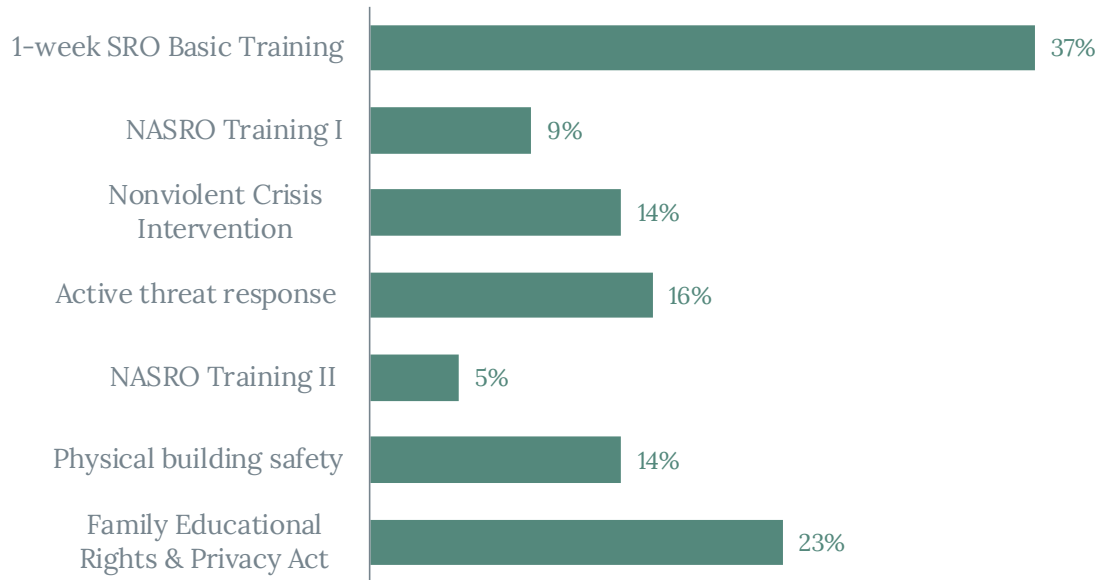
This view reflects how priorities and responses change as officers gain perspective and wisdom throughout their lives and careers. While work and life experience are important assets, a candidate's suitability to school-based work should be evalu-ated with selection criteria involving more than just the officer's seniority. Ideally officers who are selected for the SRO position would have the desire to work with youth, as well as the benefit of work/life experience and training specific to work-ing with youth prior to their deployment in schools.

Specialized Training

Of the SROs and school administrators who have an MOA, roughly a third (31% of SROs and 33% of school administrators) reported that their MOA specifies what training is required for SROs. 23% of SROs and 7% of school administrators said that there are no additional training requirements for the SRO position beyond the police training academy. 42% of school administrators and 13% of SROs were not sure if there are training requirements beyond the police academy. School admin-istrators were also much more likely than SROs to report not knowing what train-ing SROs have — nearly half of school administrators said they were unsure what trainings SROs working in their district had.

Whether required by an MOA or not, the most common training that SROs have received for their position is a 40-hour basic SRO training. SROs surveyed in Maine were less likely than SROs surveyed in national research to have had active shooter training (10% in Maine, 93% nationally),[33] and they were also less likely to report training in this area than school administrators were to report that SROs in their district received active shooter training.

Nearly half of SROs have gone through a 1-week SRO Basic Training

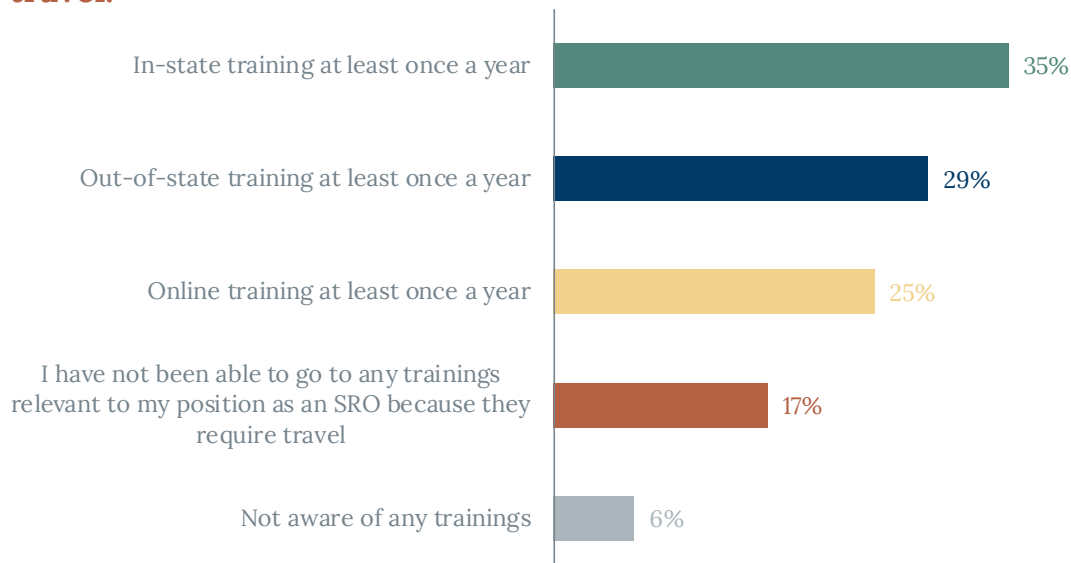| Training	Percentage
1-week SRO Basic Training	37%
NASRO Training I	9%
Nonviolent Crisis Intervention	14%
Active threat response	16%
NASRO Training II	5%
Physical building safety	14%
Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act	23%

Notably, school administrators in this study were also much more likely than SROs to report that their SROs had received training on the Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA). 23% of school administrators reported that the SROs in their district had received training on FERPA, whereas only 2% of SROs reported having been trained on FERPA.

Some SROs mentioned they attend local trainings sponsored by their department or the schools they serve. Some of the notable training the SROs have attended include: *Policing the Teen Brain*; Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate (ALICE) training; drug trends; and sexual assault trends. Of the trainings these SROs mentioned, most are geared toward responding to an active shooter or responding to illegal activity, while only *Policing the Teen Brain* focuses on how police can better understand and interact with youth. SROs noted that the information gleaned from these training opportunities provided important information and skills relevant to their positions that they had not received in basic police training. Child and adolescent development and behavior was not an area of focus at the Maine Criminal Justice Academy training they received as cadets, and several SROs mentioned that understanding and interacting with youth, and in particular students with special needs, was new to them.

Four SROs interviewed mentioned they had attended a recent NASRO training. While some lauded the NASRO conference, numerous SROs indicated that it is expensive and requires out of state travel which prevents them from attending more often. Some SROs interviewed mentioned they are NASRO certified and have used information from national trainings to create and implement safety teams and emergency plans, and instructed school staff on active shooter scenarios.

A third of SROs attend training relevant to their position at least once a year, while others are unable to do so because they require travel.

Category	Percentage
In-state training at least once a year	35%
Out-of-state training at least once a year	29%
Online training at least once a year	25%
I have not been able to go to any trainings relevant to my position as an SRO because they require travel	17%
Not aware of any trainings	6%

SROs surveyed and interviewed in this study generated the following list of topics on which they would like to have training:

- Basic & advanced NASRO courses for all SROs, new and experienced,
- Ability to go to NASRO's national conference,
- Available diversion programs,
- Cyber-bullying, social media, and technology,
- School safety, security, and threat assessment,
- Critical incident techniques (CIT)
- Building lockdown procedures,
- ALICE model for violent intruders,
- Recognizing/responding to child abuse,
- De-escalation skills,
- Conflict resolution,
- Child & adolescent development,
- Interacting with individuals in mental health crises,
- Relationship between SROs and patrol officers,
- DITEP (Drug Impairment Training for Education Professionals),
- Case law pertinent to school settings,
- New privacy laws,
- Juvenile & constitutional law

Deployment of SROs

All of the SROs surveyed said that building positive relationships with students is a daily endeavor; almost half (44%) of SROs said that developing active shooter/threat responses is an annual task, training school staff on these emergency protocols is an annual or semi-annual task, and being available for threat response is constant.

While school and law enforcement systems may regard the purpose of the SRO program as primarily threat preparedness and relationship building, SROs are routinely deployed as investigators, school grounds monitors, mediators, and counselors. Almost all SROs surveyed reported providing informal counseling daily (72%)

or weekly (24%). Half of SROs surveyed reported mediating conflicts between students daily. And nearly half (46%) of SROs reported investigating criminal activity on a weekly basis. In group interviews, stakeholders also talked about SROs being deployed for non-criminal "teachable moments."

Prevention, Reassurance, and Threat Response

In group interviews, stakeholders described their top two priorities — violence prevention and relationship building — as mutually-dependent tasks. The relationships that SROs build with students help them be aware of possible threats, and the relationships that SROs build with their colleagues in the school system enable them to approach violence prevention and response as a team.

Apart from planning for and responding to major safety threats, stakeholders asserted that SROs maintain a preventative presence. They described this role as involving being visibly present, being a first responder for medical transports, building relationships with youth that could be leveraged to prevent problems, and having information about family situations or out-of-school incidents.

Stakeholders often referenced the SRO's mere presence and visibility as being a key aspect of their usefulness. One school administrator remarked, "*Visibility, just being a presence, really matters—whether it's in his role, or more unstructured things during the school day—hallway travel, food court, or whatever—we all have our role that we play in that.*" Schools are using the SRO's visible presence as a symbol of safety and authority, with one stakeholder saying: "*I've heard students say, you know, with the things going on in society as a whole, 'I just feel safer knowing that there's an officer here.'*" The sentiment this stakeholder relayed assumes that for most people a visible law enforcement presence communicates a sense of safety

and reassurance rather than intimidation.

In regards to the SRO's task of being simply present and available, an SRO described in an interview how it is precisely this accessibility that invites students to use him as a counselor:

"I'm not in my office all that often ... But I do have an open-door policy with kids. I often get visitors that come up and speak to me about 'odds and ends' things that may or may not affect the school, in which case I will let one of the administrators know."

While the SRO's unstructured availability is one aspect of their role to respond to an emergent threat to the school, the lack of clearly defined boundaries around what exactly they are doing when they are being visibly present creates the potential for students to use the SRO in the role of a guidance counselor or social worker.

Schools know that the unstructured time that the SRO spends being available to students encourages them to have a relationship with the SRO, and that this relationship can be leveraged in situations where the school is not comfortable handling a student's behavior. One administrator described how the school relies not only on the fact that the SRO's presence symbolizes authority, but also on the SRO's rapport with students:

"...just the preventative piece and the relationships he builds with these guys. Just in coming around a corner, we have a kiddo who's on the verge of escalating—just seeing him, and it's not because of the uniform. It's because he talks to them in the food court. He'll sit down with them or chat with them while they're having lunch or during break time, and that's just so valuable to avoiding the bigger escalations that would happen if he wasn't here."

Preventative uses of the SRO such as the one described by this administrator may be convenient in avoiding situations that the school is uncomfortable handling, but it also speaks to schools' reliance on law enforcement for roles that are more appropriate for social workers or other professionals trained to help youth regulate their emotions and actions. The SRO's consistent presence and authority makes them a convenient choice for maintaining order, but unless there is an imminent threat to school safety or suspected illegal activity, research supports the effectiveness of school social workers and guidance counselors in promoting positive school climate by helping students learn to self-regulate and mediate conflicts without escalating to violence.

In addition to believing that SROs play a role in preventing violence and disorder in schools, stakeholders also frequently talked about the preventative benefit of the SRO holding information from the community as a result of their law enforcement role: *"we've had kids—not necessarily for discipline, but for home concerns—who from just the SRO's presence here can feel comfortable going to him and saying, 'Listen there's some stuff happening at home that shouldn't be happening at home.'"* One school administrator described the SRO's information privilege as being useful to the school because it can help the school build appropriate supports around students as long as it does not violate the students' right to confidentiality:

> *"When we're building supports for kids, I think that some of the knowledge you bring from the outside, what you see about these kids in the community, when you're dealing with some of their families, without violating that confidentiality piece, it gives perspective that this might work or this might work, or how to best support this family and kids."*

Knowing that information sharing be-tween school personnel and law enforcement has the potential to violate students' confidentiality, one stakeholder stated:

> *"I think the only gap in communication between law enforcement and the school is the stuff that happens outside the school with a juvenile we can't come back and tell the school that information. The expectation of privacy. So that stuff we kind of have to bite our tongue on unless obviously the school is in imminent danger."*

Maine allows law enforcement to share information pertaining to youth with school administrators when the information is credible and indicates imminent danger to the school, but the school must ensure the information does not become part of the student's education record.[79]

Building and Leveraging Relationships

Universally, SROs surveyed for this study reported relationship building to be one of the two most important parts of their job, and one that factors daily into their work. One school district administrator stated, *"From the start that was our vision for the SRO position—for someone to build relationships and work from a base of respect and relationship rather than authority."* Interviewees described building relationships to gain students' trust by being relatable and being a good role model. Leveraging these relationships then emerged as stakeholders' first preference in responding to incidents—using an existing relationship to deescalate situations or to guide students when they are facing challenges.

To build positive relationships with students, stakeholders talked about SROs being embedded in the school community in roles other than their law enforcement role, such as coaching a sports team and going to all the extra-curricular school events. One stakeholder commented, *"I'll hear him say 'I*

got eight ball games this weekend!' And he goes to 'em all. Football, baseball, basketball, field hockey…he goes to all of them." In addition to maintaining a consistent presence in multiple roles, one SRO talked about the relational component of the job as talking and listening to kids about what they are interested in and going through: "…building relationships with kids, talking to them, being the guidance for them. A lot of kids come up and will talk to me about their grades, military service…"

Stakeholders noted that the SRO's role lends itself to building relationships with students, in large part because the SRO's job is to be present patrolling campus and hanging out where youth congregate during unstructured periods (e.g. lunch, hallways, before and after school, and school events):

> *"But also because the SRO is in this building all the time, it's oftentimes on a relational basis. Does this student have a good relationship, a better relationship with [the SRO] than they have with me or Mr. [Administrator]? But it's sort of like, let's get this youngster to the person who they feel has the most trust and then bring in others if we need to. But a lot of it is super informal. I mean kids self-select whose office they walk into a lot of the time. If they need something – and teachers as well — they self-select who they think can best meet their needs."*

One school administrator noted, "*Our vulnerable students are also seeking out [the SRO]. It's not just teachers.*" SROs building rapport with students causes them to sometimes be used as confidantes, and while the SRO can be a positive figure in students' eyes, this role can also lead to breaches of due process. Numerous stakeholders described students using the SRO as a confidante in instances that would most appropriately go to the school nurse, guidance counselor, or social worker. While building positive relationships with students is an important part of the work, it can also lead to role confusion and breaches of due process.

Teachable Moments

More than half (52%) of SROs and 43% of school administrators surveyed reported that the SROs in their systems engage in non-criminal student discipline daily or weekly. Roughly a third of SROs (32%) and school administrators (33%) said school discipline never factors into the SRO's job. Stakeholders across all five interview sites talked about "teachable moments," where the SRO is deployed to educate or warn students about problematic, though not criminal, behavior:

> *"Often times it may not be an infraction of the law, but it may be a behavior that's leading a student down a road, and we can have the SRO come in and talk to the student, offer some advice, 'Hey I've seen students take this road before, this is where you're headed … if you continue this behavior.'"*

Another stakeholder commented,

> *"There are countless, countless teachable moments — whether that's the moment that you catch somebody skipping in line at lunch, or going downstairs and speaking to kids in the Functional Lifeskills Program about appropriate touch versus non-appropriate touch."*

A school administrator added other types of behaviors that might prompt a teachable moment with the SRO:

> *"We usually incorporate the SRO when we think it's helpful for them to be involved …We try to do the least restrictive thing. For example, normally you wouldn't be involved in a harassment or bullying or mean behavior thing, right? But if we*

think it's really helpful to have the SRO's perspective in there, as educational, then we will pull the SRO in — he can be preventative as much as it is reactive, right? So whenever we can leverage that, we do, because it's helpful for kids to know what ends up, what could happen."

Investigating Criminal Activity

When there is a potential violation of the law, SROs are involved in the investigation and resolution, whether an incident results in a referral to the juvenile justice system, diversion to school disciplinary channels, or diversion to programs based at the school or in the community. This study did not include questions about how investigations are conducted; future research should investigate what policies and procedures exist to guide law enforcement and school administrators to inform students, parents, and the school about investigations, what provisions there are for parents/guardians to be present, and what the protocols are for advising students about their legal rights.

While SROs and school personnel reported that they respond to a variety of offenses, theft and harassment are common offense types in the school setting. SROs approach these type of cases in much the same way they would if they incident happened in the community. The SROs will launch an investigation, gather evidence and determine who the perpetrator(s) are. Some of the newer schools have extensive video monitoring systems and film footage can be reviewed to aid the SRO and school administration in the investigation.

Where things differ is how law enforcement responds. SROs have a considerable amount of discretion. One SRO remarked,

"Not everything has to be a summons, not everything has to end up with a person going to jail whereas quite honestly, to be real honest with you, it's a lot easier when it's not that route."

While stakeholders interviewed in this study frequently talked about the importance of SRO discretion and characterized it as a tool that is generally used to divert youth from legal entanglement, the lack of policies guiding the use of discretion leads to disparities when the rules are enforced with some students and not others. Compounding the lack of policy guiding SRO response, the disparate impact on students with disabilities and students of color is unknown due to the lack of data being collected on which students are receiving a talking to instead of a summons in instances of SRO discretion.

One SRO described the use of discretion in responding to incidents based on his judgement of the severity of the crime rather than policy:

"I don't think there's any one particular scenario or circumstance that's written in stone. I do have a policy and procedure that I have to follow, which is the Police Department's SOPs [standard operating procedures]. Anytime I'm brought into a situation, that's the first thing I'm referring to. If there is a law that's been broken, I determine how significant the crime is and I use judgment as to whether or not it's something that should be moved forward or we speak about and try to clear up without any charges."

School staff and administrators are also judging the severity of an incident but the thresholds for determining whether something is a teachable moment or a legal response appear to be largely subjective and discretionary. One administrator ex-

plained, "...*like mean behavior we can usually deal with on an administrative level, but once it gets to protected classes and kids are continuing to do that, that's where you definitely pull in the SRO because that has huge implications.*"

In other cases, the severity of the incident is based not on the potential criminality but on the capacity of the school to respond to the behavior. The SRO may be involved not because a law is being broken but "when it's disruptive to a learning environment" and exceeds the school's comfort level to respond. In several interviews, SROs mentioned coaching school staff to try to respond to challenging student behavior in the classroom so as not to undermine their own authority, and when that fails, refer students to school administrators. One SRO said:

"Teachers do typically, randomly come to me directly. I find that the best result for me, as well as the student and everybody involved, is I will tell the teacher that their first stop should be to see an administrator. There's a couple reasons why I do that and one of them is not to get out of doing work but, typically, I think sometimes people are misrepresented or they don't understand the full details of what they're being told and the teachers can really bounce that off the administrators, who usually already have an idea of what's going on with that student anyway. And then, if the administrators feel they need to call me in on it, they will."

This coaching is partly an effort by this SRO to clarify their law enforcement role to teachers so that they do not become *de facto* disciplinarians. His response speaks to a larger need for 1) the SRO's role to be clearly defined and communicated to the entire school community, and 2) for schools to equip teachers with the training and student-to-teacher ratios they need for effective classroom management.

After students have been referred to the school's administration, administrators may opt to involve the SRO if they feel it is a teachable moment or if the student's behavior is beyond what administrators and other school resources (such as school social workers) are equipped to handle. One administrator gave the example of "*an out-of-control student where the teachers have tried their best, the administration has tried their best, and it's more kind of aggressive, they have to bring in the SRO.*"

If the situation warrants it, based on the severity of the crime or whether the victim insists on pressing charges, a police report is filed. In this type of scenario, a juvenile community corrections officer (JCCO) will meet with the student and their family. Depending on the nature of the case, the JCCO, in consultation with the SRO and school, may opt to divert the case to a community-based program such as restorative justice, mediation, counseling, etc., depending on what resources exist in the community. The JCCO may also forward the case to the office of the district attorney for prosecution.

Among the five schools interviewed for this report, there was some variability in how SROs respond to "person" offenses. One SRO indicated that at his school any fight results in charges being brought against the students involved, whereas interviewees at other schools mentioned that the response hinged on whether any injuries occurred and whether the injured parties wanted to press charges.

Commitment to Diversion

A common theme running across all five communities interviewed was that the schools and the SRO will attempt to divert most cases. The effort to divert is

grounded in the understanding that young people will make mistakes, and their schools should be safe places for them to learn emotional and behavioral maturity with supportive relationships and resources for their development. While diversionary strategies were not usually guided by policy, nor was data being regularly tracked on how many and which students were being diverted for various types of behavior, a JCCO commented that the lack of referrals she received from the school bore witness to their success in diverting students from justice involvement.

Diversion works because of the partnerships between the SROs, school administration, community-based programs, and to a somewhat lesser extent the JCCOs. Several interviewees mentioned that their diverted youth often do not recidivate. A justice system stakeholder emphasized, "...jail's not the answer because, let me tell you, when they go to jail, what do we have now? If they're 14 years old and they've already experienced Long Creek, we've lost them, because we have nothing now."

The diversionary programs available in each school and community differ, but those mentioned included a community-based alternative suspension program through the Boys and Girls Club, Diversion to Assets (D2A), Maine Youth Court, school-based restorative justice, school-based substance abuse counseling, the Prime For Life substance abuse program, and community-based behavioral health offerings such as multi-systemic therapy (MST) through providers such as Sweetser, Maine Behavioral Health Crisis, and/or Day One. Most schools offer some of this programming in-house and will refer to community programs when they are available, as one school administrator noted:

"We think of a discipline philosophy, like, you have support and you have consequences. Oftentimes there's a referral to the guidance counselor, or to the social worker, or the alternative suspension program — we send students to the suspension diversion program for the day – and it's meant as support."

Some of the schools have codified diversionary policies; others have not. As more schools become interested in the SRO model and diversionary practices, written policy from schools that use diversion programs would be helpful for replication purposes   .

Communication and Role Clarity

SROs work daily with partners in different roles and systems to serve youth. To accomplish this without overstepping boundaries, interviewees talked about the importance of role clarity and frequent communication. One school administrator described the strength of having a team that communicates honestly even when there are disagreements, and where all parties are aware of the boundaries and responsibilities of their roles:

"We have the ability to go into a closed room, air it out like a lot...of teams do, and at the end of the day we're going to leave united. We may or may not share some things in there that can't be shared out there, but at the end of the day, we're a team that cares about one another, that understands...So we respect one another's roles and responsibilities in this job...that he has a certain thing that he needs to uphold. And at the end of the day, I can try to push him, and he's still going to say no. You know, it happens."

Frequent communication ensures that stakeholders can be reminded of the boundaries between the school's roles and law enforcement's roles. The stakeholders who are in consistent communication are often those who are co-located on campus

daily. But partners who are not working daily in close proximity reiterated that communication is important and that communication lines "could be improved," as one JCCO put it:

"[Referrals to justice system] are very few, I will say that. I get very few reports—I got two last week and that's been months since I got reports, months and months. So I know whatever is going on is being diverted. After that, I don't think there's a really good line of communication, I think it could be improved, but I know I have [the principal's] email. Most of the cases, knock on wood, are assaults."

Just as interviews emphasized the importance of frequent communication, the majority of survey participants (62% of SROs and 72% of school administrators) responded that partners from both departments meet to discuss any situation in which there are conflicting priorities regarding the SRO's roles. Despite the range of collaborative decision-making styles reported by stakeholders, most (94% of SROs and 100% of school administrators) reported feeling that their resolution process is effective.

Data and Evaluation

As with the previously mentioned aspects of SRO program implementation, data collection and evaluation practices vary from site to site. The following areas outline what SRO programs in Maine are currently documenting or not documenting about their activities, who those data are shared with, and how they are used.

Current Documentation Practices

As law enforcement officers, SROs generate police reports. As mandated reporters, they must also make reports when they are aware of suspected child abuse or neglect.[80] Law enforcement records generally start with a call number, followed by an offense number depend-

ing on the incident, and may generate an arrest number if charges are brought. SROs described some discretion regarding whether a report needs to be generated. In other cases, SROs documented facts they felt second shift patrol officers needed to be aware of.

Schools are required by MDOE to keep track of disciplinary events in certain categories (weapons, violence, drugs and alcohol related) and their resolutions (in or out of school suspension, removal to an alternative education setting, and expulsion with and without services). Schools may report additional resolution data if other strategies were used (such as referrals to restorative justice), but this is not required reporting. The data MDOE requires schools to collect does not include involvement of SROs for behavioral events.[81] Interviews with stakeholders delved into these documentation practices across the five sites.

A common sentiment that interviewees shared in each of the five sites was that "*they already document a lot.*" One SRO commented, "*With the quantity of the informal stuff that I do, we don't keep track of that because it would be nonstop. Every time I talk to a kid, you could almost say it was a formal encounter.*" For SRO programs that received grant funding, there was a higher degree of documentation required. Only one site mentioned documenting the SRO's activities beyond any necessary police reports for grant reporting purposes:

"I came into this position under a grant, and part of that was that I had to report each thing that I did in the whole course of my day. Since then, other than the police reports, it's not documented."

However, this information was reported to the granting agency, not to the school, police department, or the state. Furthermore, documentation obligations decreased as the grant was nearing its end.

Mandatory reporting laws in Maine require that adults working with youth must report suspected abuse or neglect.[80] And while Maine does not have mandated arrest offenses for juveniles, officers may arrest for certain offenses including behaviors such as harassment, assault, criminal threatening, terrorizing, and theft.[82,83,84] One SRO said:

> *"We have mandatory reporting. There are certain crimes that, if it's reported to you, you have to take a report, like harassment, assaults, what not. We keep offense reports. We keep arrest reports. Then we also do accident reports as well. Incidents that, sometimes I will create a call incident just for if I have contact, but depending on if I think it's going to transfer over into the afternoon or something like that...We stick with the mandatory reporting — arrests, offenses and accident reports."*

The seriousness of the behavior was a key determinant in documentation by the school or the SRO. No policies existed stating what must be documented, when, and by whom. Similar to the severity thresholds that determine how behavior is handled and by whom, police reports are generated using the discretion of the officer who routinely makes the decision based on the seriousness of an offense (including whether a victim wants to press charges), and on the possibility that second shift patrol officers may need to know about an incident.

Discretion to not track data emerged as a common theme across sites. This discretion was discussed less as an attempt to reduce the SRO's workload, but more as an attempt to not create a paper trail on student misbehavior that may cause them undue repercussions as they mature out of such behaviors. One SRO described how situations that he assists in resolving might create neither an incident report nor an arrest report:

> *"...there are a lot of things—we had a stolen bike last week...We knew who stole it. His mom brought it back to us, and it was in perfect condition and the kid got his bike back. A school-based issue, they dealt with the kid on the school side of that, and the other kid was just happy to get his $400 bike back and he was good with that. So I didn't do any paperwork on that."*

There is similar inconsistency in the documentation of which student conduct results in diversion. While sites generally talked about their commitment to diversion, schools and SROs interviewed did not have consistent documentation for their diversion activities. One SRO commented, "*I keep my own file which is shared throughout the department, all the D2A referrals. We also do the same thing for truancy. We keep track of dispositions.*" While most sites did not have a regular documentation practice for diversions, a JCCO inferred from the lack of referrals to juvenile community corrections that there must be diversion happening even if the school could not say how many students had been diverted from legal involvement.

Data Sharing and Use

This study finds that schools and law enforcement are usually creating intentional separation between the data that is tracked by the school and by law enforcement:

> *"Well, I guess the thing is that we kind of keep it separate for purposes.... We work collaboratively on things that are going on, but once a student is in the juvenile justice system, we might help support each other, but I'm not as involved in that*

process.... I said we have that progressive discipline process, but that's just if there's an issue."

Separation of records is required under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).[85] FERPA 34 C.F.R. §§ 99.31 and 99.36 prohibits schools sharing personally identifying information contained in a student's educational records with law enforcement without consent except in emergencies where such information is deemed necessary for safety.[86] FERPA does not however prohibit school staff from including SROs in communications or conversations about staff's observations of students or information derived from sources other than education records.

Sites typically talked about including the SRO when discussing students — either in meetings or in a shared GoogleDoc — when the students concerned were interacting with both the school's disciplinary system and the SRO. One SRO remarked, "*I don't have access to their system,*" but is nevertheless invited to meetings to discuss students needing support:

"The meetings are structured every week where we're case-studying kids and we're talking about primarily on academic, social, emotional, mental health concerns that have come up and how we're going to support that kid. If there is a significant behavior issue...that's involved [the SRO], he's brought in as part of the conversation."

Stakeholders across all sites indicated that the vast majority of youth contacted by the SRO are already in school's disciplinary system: "99.9%, *probably 100% of the kids that [the SRO] is dealing with, we're already dealing with together, because they're our [high risk/needs] kids.*" The stakeholders participating in meetings to discuss student support needs characterized the information sharing forums as geared toward identifying the right supports to wrap around students: "*We collaboratively talk about what we're going to do, like, 'what are you going to do here.' And we'll make the internal referrals to our internal pieces and our community partners who help us, but that's where we'd go with it.*"

While FERPA prohibits schools from sharing information from students' educational and disciplinary records with SROs, stakeholders interviewed usually did not have a clear process to ensure that this type of information (which would include IEPs, school disciplinary documentation, or student work) would not enter into communications in which the SRO was included. Particularly for more vulnerable students who are at a higher risk of being contacted by the SRO and being disciplined by the school (such as students with developmental or learning disabilities), and thus being discussed by school personnel and the SRO at team meetings or in shared Google Docs, schools must seek consent from students' parents/guardian before sharing information protected by FERPA with the SRO.

Law enforcement is not permitted to share information pertaining to youth with school administrators unless the information is credible and indicates imminent danger to the school, and any information law enforcement does share with the school cannot become part of the student's education record.[79] However schools may be unaware of how frequently SROs charge students and for what behaviors. In one exchange, the SRO was unsure whether the school always knew when he charged a student, "*I think, typically, the school knows when I charge somebody. If there's been a crime that's been committed within the school. I can't say that the administrator is not aware of it when I'm charging them...*" to which the school replied "*We always know.*" Despite "always knowing," school stakeholders talked about not tracking legal outcomes, only school-based behaviors and resolutions:

"That's not something that we as a school – we track the behavior but not the out-come or the conclusion. We wouldn't ever attach that to a file for discipline refer-ral, "and the student was charged." We wouldn't do that. We strictly try to stick with whatever the behavior was and what the school-based consequence was."

Students' legal involvement must not become part of their educational records, but schools deploying SROs should be aware of how many students are arrested on their campuses — and for what behaviors — so that appropriate supports can be added to the school to address students' needs. MDOE does not collect data on whether SROs were involved in detecting or responding to behavioral events, and most schools interviewed did not have a regular practice of reviewing aggregate data on the SRO's activities, including all charges brought against students.

Aggregate data on SRO activities can facilitate robust evaluation and oversight of the program. One SRO mentioned presenting aggregate arrest data to the school board each academic year:

"[The SRO] goes and presents to the school board along with the administrators, and we have two slides that share all the charges that were brought and also says what things they were for so that we help to educate them. But in terms of the resolution, I don't think we've done that yet. Like what happened as a result of [a behavioral incident]."

School disciplinary data are reported to MDOE annually, and also used by the school to note trends and address them, as well as to gauge how well their re-sponses are working. One site interviewed described using their aggregate data to decrease the use of exclusionary discipline by creating a new avenue for diversion to a community-based program:

"We were really high in our suspension numbers, and so... to make sure that doesn't happen...we created the Alternative Suspension program. So we collect that data for suspensions, alternative suspensions, detentions – we have quar-terly reports – I look at those and other things we could have not suspended about. But I don't do the same for the cases that go to the court system..."

In addition to making programmatic changes to better support students, these data have also been used to make staffing decisions to hire more school social workers:

"...the number of times that a guidance counselor or a principal at the elementary school was dealing with the need for supporting students really drove the data to support our need for social work. So we ended up getting three positions, two at the elementary level and one at this level, because we were noticing kids need extra support."

Schools using their aggregate data to make appropriate hires, improve practices, and create needed diversionary programs to support students demonstrates the positive effects of collecting and reviewing data. Given the variety of ways that schools are deploying SROs in Maine, there is a need to track common metrics related to SRO activities, and create mechanisms for these aggregate data to be regularly reviewed, not only by internal stakeholders, but also by external stake-holders. Commitment to transparency and data-informed practice can facilitate robust evaluation and valuable oversight for Maine's SRO programs to ensure they operate in a way that contributes to safe, fair, and inclusive schools.

Discussion

The purpose of this study is to provide insight into the current scope of school-based policing in Maine and offer best practices from national literature to inform how Maine moves forward with SRO program implementation. This study is the first time Maine has taken collective stock of how schools are deploying law enforcement, and its findings are consistent with assessments of SRO programs nationally:

1. **Policy:** There is wide variation in how Maine's SRO programs are structured and supported in policy, and as a result, schools deploy SROs in a variety of ways.
2. **Role:** SROs are visibly present and perceived as available by students, which leads students to use them as counselors or confidantes.
3. **Training:** There are no statewide training requirements for SROs, and local training requirements or provisions for SROs vary widely.
4. **Data and Evaluation:** The data being collected on SRO activities are highly discretionary within and across sites, and insufficient for meaningful evaluation or oversight.
5. **Oversight:** There is minimal local oversight and no statewide oversight for SRO programs in Maine.

This study finds that in each of these areas, Maine's SRO programs operate differently from one area to the next. To encourage more unified policies and practices, statewide coordination in the deployment and conduct of SROs, as well as their evaluation, this discussion examines what is currently practiced in Maine and provides best practices recommended in national research.

Policy

Memoranda of Agreement (MOA)

While the majority of stakeholders participating in this study reported having an MOA between the school and police departments (four of the five sites interviewed and three-quarters of SROs surveyed), some do not. Consistent with the lack of uniform governance of SRO programs nationally, this study indicates that there are communities in Maine deploying SROs without a written agreement outlining the structure of the program, the requirements for the officer in the position, the responsibilities and boundaries of the SRO role, or the mechanism for evaluating the impact of the SRO program on school safety and youth outcomes.

The school-justice partnership model advanced by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) provides a toolkit[88] to establish a robust partnership and craft a clear MOA. Within this framework for governing and implementing SRO programs, the partnering agencies make use of baseline data on disciplinary and legal interventions most commonly used in their district or jurisdiction. These data help partners identify the types of incidents their MOA needs to address intentionally and collaboratively. This provides the basis for crafting a formal agreement between the partnering agencies about decision-making processes and specific graduated supports and consequences to employ before resorting to a formal legal response. This model promotes data informed policy and practice that is reliant on engaged partnership.

Officer Selection

While partnership is central to SRO program success, the importance of having the right individual in the SRO role cannot be overstated. Regarding officer selection, this study echoes what stakeholders have said in other studies and validates what best practices suggest for SRO selection: self-selection and life/work experience are key. SROs themselves emphasized that SROs should have several years of experience on the police force and should want to work with youth.

While experience is an important asset, the single most harmful approach to officer selection is the deployment of SROs to schools based on seniority or proximity to retirement. The desire, temperament, and training to work with youth is necessary for any officer being deployed in schools, regardless of rank or experience.[25]

Having the work-life balance of daytime/weekday shifts was a prominent theme despite interviewees talking about often working evening sporting events or dances and resuming patrol work during the summertime and school vacations. For several SROs interviewed, the appeal of these two factors was enough to prompt their taking substantial pay cuts from the positions they held prior to becoming SROs. While the SRO's schedule may be appealing, any officer selected for the position must demonstrate their suitability for working with youth.

Officer self-selection and specialized training do not guarantee an officer will be a good fit for the school setting. Regular performance reviews with input from stakeholders in both systems, including students, can help ensure the right officer is in the SRO position.

The officer selection process used in Lincoln, NE is a model for ensuring officer suitability – rather than seniority – is prioritized when hiring SROs. In addition to demonstrating their aptitude as a police officer, candidates in Lincoln, NE must demonstrate their ability to communicate and interact with kids, their community involvement, and their commitment to youth development. School administrators also provide input to the police department about SRO candidates.[90] The participation of school stakeholders in the hiring process and the focus on officers' aptitude for working with youth together emphasize that the SRO program's priority is positive youth development. After this selection process, officers selected for the SRO position then participate in NASRO's 40-hour basic SRO training, training in adolescent development and psychology with an emphasis on effective police interactions with teens, an additional 40 hours of Behavioral Health Assessment Training, and annual mandatory in-service training on implicit bias, cultural competency and de-escalation.[78]

Recommendation

POLICY

For successful SRO program implementation, NASRO and other experts in the field strongly recommend crafting a clear and strong MOA that:

- outlines processes for officer selection and assessment,[25,30,87,88]
- specifies additional specialized training for SROs,[7,15,16,25,27,30,88]
- clearly defines roles and responsibilities as well as appropriate boundaries for officer intervention,[25,27,30,31,39,44,57,76,88,89,89]
- addresses how students' rights will be protected, including when they must be advised of their *Miranda* rights, when parents/guardians must be notified and given an opportunity to be present,[8,31]
- identifies data to be collected,[25,27,30,31,44,88,89]
- establishes a mechanism for program evaluation and oversight,[25,27,30,31,44,45,79,88,89,90] and
- is reviewed regularly with partnering agencies.[25,88,89]

Massachusetts, Colorado, and most recently Nebraska, have legislated the creation of a standard MOA for use by all school districts and law enforcement agencies deploying officers to the schools (see Appendix D).[32]

Role

SROs can be one component of schools' safety strategies, but the costs associated with an SRO program should be balanced with other structures that have been demonstrated to improve school climate and student wellbeing, and by extension, school safety. SRO positions were funded initially with federal grants. When those grants expire, the cost of sustaining the SRO(s) shifts to the school and/or police department budget, or SRO position is eliminated. When local police and school departments bear the costs associated with an SRO program (i.e. salary, overtime, benefits, training, vehicles, equipment, etc.), it can reduce funds available for other important components of a safe and healthy school environment, such as school counselors, social workers, psychologists, and nurses.

Professional standards recommend schools have at least one counselor and one social worker for every 250 students, one psychologist per 500-700 students, and at least one nurse per 750 students.[45] A 2018 study conducted by the ACLU found that 90% of students in public schools do not have access to these support professionals in the recommended ratios.[45] On average, Maine schools have one counselor per 303 students, one social worker per 617 students, one psychologist per 1,830 students, and one nurse per 503 students. Furthermore, this study found that many states reported 2-3 times more police officers than social workers in schools. While it should be noted that Maine still has far fewer SROs than counselors, social workers, and psychologists, **Maine schools are increasing the number of SROs while they are not yet meeting the recommended ratios for these other school-based support professionals.**

This study indicates that SROs, as they are currently being used in Maine schools, are visibly present and perceived as available by students, which leads students to use them in the capacity of a counselor or confidante. When a student's most positive relationship with an adult on campus is with law enforcement, it speaks to a need in Maine's public schools for more available adults with whom students can connect and find support. To shift which adults students perceive as available, and which adults they access when they need support, schools can work toward meeting the recommended staffing ratios of school counselors, social workers, nurses, and others who do not have a dual role as law enforcement.

Of the various school-based professionals tasked with promoting safety and wellbeing, SROs are more expensive than social workers, counselors, psychologists and nurses. While salaries vary by geography, a study in Washington State calculated that a district paying $100,000 toward their SRO program could have hired 1.8 teachers, 1.8 guidance counselors, 1.8 school psychologists, 1.8 school social workers, 2.4 school nurses, or 5 teacher's aides.[31] If the SRO program is to be one component of a larger school safety strategy, **schools should ensure they are first allocating adequate resources toward the recommended student support professionals in the appropriate ratios to the student body, as these supports have been shown to increase overall school safety and student wellbeing.[91]**

Training

Prior research has shown inconsistencies in training requirements for SROs, and wide variation in the level of training among SROs working in schools nationally.[27,30] Maine is no different. This study found that some jurisdictions specify required training for SROs, others do not. Research and policy experts in the field recommend at least 40 hours of role-specific training for SROs covering certain topics that go beyond their police training.[7,14,15,16,28,29,30,35] Some states (Colorado, Massachu-

setts, Texas, and Nebraska) now require that SROs are trained before starting work in schools.[32] In 2014 the USDOE recommended training in the following areas for all SROs prior beginning their post in a school:

- Students' rights and up-to-date legal information,
- Child and adolescent development and psychology,
- Positive and developmentally-appropriate behavioral interventions, or those strategies that effectively teach, model, and support student behaviors that promote a safe and positive school environment,
- Conflict resolution, peer mediation, and restorative justice techniques,
- How to work with children with disabilities and special needs,
- Cultural competence, or a recognition, understanding, and appreciation for the distinct cultural groups represented at schools, and
- Knowledge about community-based resources to help students and families and how to make referrals.

Additional areas that have been suggested for continuing professional development include:

- Restorative practices
- Implicit bias and disproportionality in school-based arrests based on race and disability
- Cultural competency in religious practices, clothing preferences, identity, and other areas
- Mental health protocols and trauma-informed care
- De-escalation skills and positive behavior interventions and supports
- Training in proper policies, procedures, and techniques for the use of restraint
- Teen dating violence and healthy teen relationships
- Understanding and protecting civil rights in schools
- Special education law
- Student privacy protections and laws governing the release of student information
- School-specific approaches to topics like bullying prevention, cyber safety, emergency management and crisis response, threat assessment, and social-emotional learning

Not only do these topics mirror what SROs surveyed and interviewed for this study listed as topics on which they want training, many of these training components could be addressed in-state. NASRO is by many accounts a leader in the field of school-based policing, offering Basic, Advanced, and Supervisor and Management courses. Some SROs in Maine are already NASRO certified and can host NASRO trainings. Additionally, Strategies for Youth, a Massachusetts-based organization that provides training and technical assistance for SRO programs nationally, has offered *Policing the Teen Brain* to officers in Maine. The desire expressed by SROs in this study to receive training that will improve their ability to work with youth today, and the potential for Maine's SROs to access such training in or near Maine, suggest that Maine should take a similar step and create standard training requirements for SROs.

Data and Evaluation

Deploying law enforcement in schools carries the risk that students will experience harsher discipline and contact with the legal system; hence documenting practices, evaluating outcomes, and being transparent are important components of any SRO program. Consistent with research on SRO programs nationally[14,30,42] a major

Recommendation

DATA COLLECTION

Collecting relevant data is key for the evaluation of SRO programs in Maine to ensure that police presence on school campuses is providing safer schools and not harming youth. A robust use of data enables systems to continuously monitor student outcomes and improve program policies and practices to yield better outcomes. To facilitate data-informed policy and program choices happening at local and state levels, it is recommended that SRO programs:

- Track common metrics across all SRO programs, including arrests made and charges brought against students, disaggregated by age, race, gender, and disability status, at a minimum;[25,27,31,89]
- Report aggregate data to local oversight entity and state oversight entity;
- Schools with higher rates of charging or arresting students should prompt an audit of the school's procedures for responding to behavioral incidents.[25]

finding of this study is the lack of data collection to measure impacts and effectiveness of SROs. Interviews revealed inconsistency in what SRO data are being tracked, which limits the use of data to inform policy and practice.

Annual review of discipline data can help schools monitor whether students are getting adequate and equitable supports and interventions from the school. Similarly, reviewing aggregate data on the activities of SROs deployed in the school or district can help monitor whether the program is contributing to a school-to-prison pipeline. At the state level, an oversight body that collects and reviews SRO data can monitor the impacts of the deployment of SROs in Maine's public schools on youth, and vulnerable youth in particular.[22,25,27,42,89]

Aggregate data can be used by schools and law enforcement to monitor whether the protocols they have in place are responding effectively to students' needs. This study found that some SRO program partnerships are engaging in this process internally: reviewing their own data and using it to improve their responses. As a result of this practice, one site created an alternative suspension program and hired three additional social workers. This internal use of data to shape programmatic choices can and should occur in all of Maine's local SRO programs, as well as at the state level.

This study finds that, in most cases, data on SROs' activities are not being presented to and reviewed by a local and/or statewide oversight body tasked with monitoring how SROs are being used by the school and what impact this is having on students. Aggregate school disciplinary data and law enforcement data should be reported at least annually to local and state oversight bodies that are comprised of multidisciplinary stakeholders including students, parents, and youth advocates, to monitor whether students are receiving appropriate and equitable treatment for school-based behavior.[31] Only one site interviewed for this study mentioned annual reporting the number of students arrested or charged to the district's school board. To enable SRO impacts to be monitored in Maine, it is recommended that the following documentation be part of a routine report of law enforcement involvement in school-based incidents:[31]

- Number of times that students were handcuffed, restrained, or summoned on campus, and the basis for each incident;
- Number of times students were referred for prosecution for a school-related offense; and
- Number of arrests of students for school-related offenses. Data should be disaggregated by school site, offense, disposition of the matter, and student subgroup, including age, race, ethnicity, student English Learner status, foster youth status, gender, disability, whether the student has an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or Section 504 Plan.

In addition to collecting and reporting on these data, the ACLU recommends that any officer use of force on a student be documented, the school administrator be informed as soon as possible, the student's parent/guardian be informed within 24 hours, and an incident report be submitted to the district office including:[31]

- Date and time of the incident;
- The name and job title of the officer who administered the force;
- A description of the circumstances that led to the use of force;
- Any de-escalation tactics used by the officer to avoid the use of force;
- Whether the student was physically injured and whether any medical care was provided;
- Any recommendations for changing the amount or nature of resources available to the student or staff to avoid such incidents in the future.

Transparency is a key component of SRO program success.[44] In addition to reporting data on law enforcement responses to incidents involving students, it is recommended that these regular reports include a review of district policies and practices guiding deployment of law enforcement, efforts to reduce disproportionate law enforcement contact with vulnerable students, and information about the percentage of time SROs spend in their various roles (i.e. teaching classes, supervising extracurricular activities, coaching school sports, patrolling campus, investigating criminal activity, and counseling students and/or families).[3]

Stakeholder Involvement and Oversight

Finally, meaningful stakeholder involvement is critical for successful SRO programs. **Student perspectives should be a central piece of data gathered for SRO program evaluation, and student voice should be prominent in local and state oversight of SRO programs.**

Stakeholders in this study voiced *"I've heard students say, you know, with the things going on in society as a whole, 'I just feel safer knowing that there's an officer here.'"* This assumes that visible law enforcement presence communicates a sense of safety and reassurance. Prominent security, including law enforcement presence, does not necessarily provide a sense of reassurance to all students.[6,27,41,50,51,52,54,56,57,58,61,63] While SRO presence may indeed provide a feeling of safety to some or many students and school personnel, this experience is not universal. Some students have had negative experiences with law enforcement, and police presence on their campuses may be more intimidating than reassuring. The range of experiences that students have of SROs being present in their schools should be central in evaluation and oversight of SRO programs.

Recommendation

OVERSIGHT

Given the current lack of community oversight of Maine's SRO programs, recommendations for increased collaboration, transparency, and oversight include:

- Schools deploying SROs should ensure that parents are versed in the agreements governing the SRO program at their children's school, and should make information about the SRO program publically available and accessible.[92]
- Oversight groups should be comprised of students, parents, community-based organizations, childrens' mental/behavioral health providers, youth advocates, and other stakeholders as appropriate.[25,27,89]
- At the local level, an oversight board should be responsible for regularly reviewing the school's data related to SRO activities and school disciplinary events and resolutions.[31]
- At the state level, an oversight board should be responsible for reviewing data reported by SRO programs statewide and monitoring overuse of arrests and exclusionary discipline practices, especially as they are used on culturally, racially, and economically vulnerable students.

Successful SRO programs are facilitated by cross-system and community collaboration, hence their oversight should be likewise collaborative. This study indicates a lack of oversight of Maine's SRO programs, both at the community level and the state level. The lack of oversight of school-based policing from community and multidisciplinary stakeholders is consistent with national research which has found that more than 52% of police departments do not gather feedback from stakeholders about their practices regarding the policing of youth.[36] Nationally it is even less common for rural police departments to gather feedback from stakeholders about their handling of juvenile crime.[36] Seeking stakeholder feedback, community oversight, and being accountable to positive youth outcomes is vital if SRO programs are to be an effective component of school safety strategies and avoid the potential pitfalls of policing students at their schools.

Limitations of this Study

This study is the first attempt to assess the scope and methods of school-based policing in Maine. As such, it made use of the information currently available about schools and police departments supporting SROs. It is likely that some of Maine's SRO programs were not included in the survey that was distributed to SROs known to MCOC at the time. As of fall 2019, MDOE will have a more complete list of SROs, that can be used in future studies and evaluations of SRO programs in Maine.

The five group interviews conducted in Augusta, Falmouth, Lewiston, Old Town, and Sanford likewise give an incomplete picture of SRO programs throughout the state. The sites were selected to represent five different counties, each of the three MDOC regions, and different styles of SRO deployment (SROs embedded full-time in the high school and SROs covering as many as five campuses K-12). Sites were also selected based on the availability and willingness of stakeholders to participate in a 90-minute group interview. This final criteria may have limited the study's findings because the stakeholders who agreed to participate in these group interviews may be more engaged in their SRO program, more collaborative with each other, and have more favorable attitudes toward the SRO program in general than other stakeholders who were not interviewed. This convenience sample of SRO program partners may not be representative of the views and collaboration styles of other SRO programs in Maine or elsewhere.

A further limitation of the group interview methodology is eliciting socially desirable responses. This study design employed group stakeholder interviews to gain deeper understanding of the cross-system partnerships, policies, and practices that facilitate the SRO program. While this design generated positive conversations and produced rich data, individuals in this setting are less likely to offer critiques of their colleagues or negative assessments of their program's weaker areas. Future studies should include individual interviews to allow participants to share candidly.

Future research should pursue voices of other stakeholders not included in this study, namely students, parents, defense attorneys, and other school personnel. These perspectives are critical to understanding how the deployment of SROs in Maine schools is impacting school climate and school safety.

Conclusion

This study provides a first glimpse into the scope of school-based policing in Maine. Noteworthy findings include that there is wide variation in how Maine's SRO programs are structured and supported in policy, there are no statewide training standards for SROs beyond basic police training, schools are deploying SROs in a variety of ways with varying degrees of protocol or discretion, the data being collected on SRO activities are inconsistent from one site to the next and insufficient for meaningful evaluation, and there is minimal oversight locally and no statewide oversight for SRO programs in Maine. Stakeholders in this study demonstrated a high degree of collaboration with their program partners, and their commitment to the youth they serve was evident. To ensure that SRO programs in Maine are adequately guided and supported to have a positive impact on youth in their schools, the overall recommendations emerging from this study are as follows:

1. **Offer uniform guidance in policy.**
   Mandate that school districts supporting SROs operate with an up-to-date model MOA that clearly outlines processes for officer selection and assessment, specifies additional specialized training for SROs, defines roles and responsibilities as well as appropriate boundaries for officer intervention, specifically addresses students' rights, identifies data to be collected, and establishes a mechanism for program evaluation and oversight (see Appendix D). The MOA should be drafted by a multidisciplinary team including representatives of the school administration, the police agencies serving that school district, and child advocates. That team should be informed by a separate team of parents, students, teachers and social workers/guidance counselors headed up by the child advocates.

2. **Invest in holistic school safety.**
   Ensure that all schools that utilize SRO programs employ student support professionals in the recommended ratios to the student body (e.g. school counselors 1:250, social workers 1:250, psychologists 1:700, nurses 1:750).

3. **Standardize training requirements to reflect best practices.**
   Require that all SROs receive a minimum of 40 hours of role-specific training that includes the following topics prior to starting work in a school, and 10 hours of continuing education each year:
   • Students' rights and up-to-date legal information;
   • Child and adolescent development and psychology, with a special emphasis on how exposure to trauma affects students ability to learn and regulate their behavior;
   • Positive and developmentally-appropriate behavioral interventions, or those strategies that effectively teach, model, and support student behaviors that promote a safe and positive school environment;

- Conflict resolution, peer mediation, and restorative justice techniques;
- How to work with children with disabilities and special needs;
- Cultural competence, or a recognition, understanding, and appreciation for the distinct cultural groups represented at schools; and
- Knowledge about community-based resources to help students and families and how to make referrals.

4. **Collect common data metrics to facilitate evaluation.**
- Mandate that all SRO programs collect and report common metrics to enable evaluation of the program's impact on school safety and student wellbeing at local and state levels. At a minimum, metrics should include:
- Number of times that SROs handcuffed, restrained, or summoned students on campus and the basis for each incident;
- Number of court referrals by SROs; and
- Arrests of students made by SROs: disaggregated by school site, offense, disposition of the matter, and student demographics, including age, race, ethnicity, student English Learner status, foster youth status, gender, disability, whether the student has an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or Section 504 Plan.

5. **Involve stakeholders in program oversight.**
Form oversight boards at local and state levels to provide input, review program data, and monitor SRO impacts on youth outcomes. Stakeholders providing oversight should include of students, parents, community-based organizations, children's mental/behavioral health providers, and youth advocates.

6. **Conduct further research focusing on:**
- The actual costs of providing SROs in schools in Maine;
- The cost of providing the non-law enforcement services that are currently being provided by SROs (counseling, mediation, managing non-criminal student behavior) by other professionals trained in those areas; and
- Perspectives from other stakeholders including parents, students, child advocates, and defense attorneys. Further interviews with school-based stakeholders including guidance counselors and social workers should be conducted individually to allow for the most candid responses and their unique perspectives on the practices and impacts of school-based policing.

Appendices

Appendix A: 2019 Federal Legislation

H.R. 607 – The School Resource Officer Assessment Act of 2019, introduced by Rep. Clay Higgins (R-LA-3), would require the Attorney General and Secretary of Education to conduct a survey of all public schools to determine the number of SROs and whether they are full-time or part-time.

H.R. 916 – The School Resource Officer Act of 2019, introduced by Rep. Paul Mitchell (R-MI-10), would amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to require at least 30% of COPS grant funds to be used for the salaries and benefits of SROs. It authorizes $300,000,000 in appropriations for each of fiscal year 2020 through 2023 for cops in schools, and increases federal funding for hiring of a career law enforcement officer under this program from $75,000 to $125,000.

H.R. 443 – The PROTECT KIDS Act, or Promoting Resource Officers Together for Exceptionally Critical Targets with Key Investments in Districts and Schools Act of 2019, introduced by Rep. Gus Bilirakis (R-FL-12), would authorize the Attorney General to establish a five-year pilot program to make grants to local educational agencies to enter into partnerships with local law enforcement agencies for the hiring of school resource officers. This grant is capped at $10,000,000 for each fiscal and applicants must be able to match federal funds using state or local sources, and local educational agencies with student populations over 65,000 may receive preferential consideration.

H.R. 608 – The School Watch and Tactics Act of 2019, introduced Rep. Clay Higgins (R-LA-3), would direct the Attorney General and the Secretary of Education to develop and implement best practices for occupation-specific education for school resource officers. These practices would be developed, disseminated, and reported to Congress within one year after mandatory consultation with the stakeholders identified by the Act.

Appendix B: "Be Her Resource" SRO Toolkit Recommendations

Be Her Resource: A toolkit about school resource officers and girls of color is a set of recommendations based on a 2018 study conducted by the Center on Poverty and Inequality at Georgetown Law. This toolkit and the guiding principles the report puts forth, is based on targeted universalism, which posits that an approach tailored for the benefit of individuals who are most adversely impacted by a program, will ultimately benefit the entire program population. The full report can be found here: https://www.law.georgetown.edu/poverty-inequality-center/wp-content/uploads/sites/14/2018/05/17_SRO-final-_Acc.pdf

1. **Clearly restrict law enforcement roles and responsibilities in formal agreements with schools**

The broad discretion exercised by SROs, as well as the lack of clarity about their roles our research uncovered, reveal the need for formal agreements between schools and police departments — known as memoranda of understanding (MOUs) — that clearly limit the role of law enforcement to responding to criminal activity and prohibit SROs from enforcing disciplinary policy. … By creating clear boundaries for appropriate officer intervention, these terms can help avoid incidents in which minor violations escalate into conflicts with police and reduce the criminalization of disciplinary policies that disproportionately affect girls of color.

2. **Develop incident protocols and decision-making instruments for SROs**

Written protocols or other standards for responding to incidents can help improve interactions with girls of color. These instruments should be collaboratively created with input from community stakeholders, including counselors, service agencies, and health professionals who regularly work with girls of color. The goal is to develop a decision-making process for SROs that is grounded in the best available evidence from research and the field, while taking unique local factors into consideration and putting a special focus on race and gender. These protocols should be made public to increase transparency and hold police departments accountable

3. **Collect, review, and act on data**

Collecting and reviewing data can help police departments and schools more effectively improve interactions with girls of color and patterns of disproportionate contact.

4. **Develop and implement a continuum of non-punitive responses**

School systems should implement approaches that are responsive to girls of color and account for students' life experiences, including histories of trauma. Such approaches should include processes to resolve conflict, such as restorative practices, which create an opportunity for productive dialogue and have been shown to reduce rates of exclusionary discipline. SROs must be trained to help successfully implement such approaches.

5. **Provide SROs with training on gender and racial bias and culturally competent approaches**

SRO training can improve interpretation of, and responses to, the behavior of girls of color by accounting for their layers of identity, including their race, ethnicity, gender identity, and sexual orientation. As NASRO has stated, "a commitment to proper training is the key to success in SRO programs." Given the current lack of training curricula specifically tailored to issues relevant to girls of color, professional development opportunities on these topics should be developed.

6. **Require SRO training on children's and adolescents' mental health**

SROs should receive training from school-based counselors and information about community mental-health resources to improve their responses to girls of color. Such training can improve interdisciplinary team effectiveness. As the National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN) has recognized, "When

police officers acquire a trauma perspective and work in concert with mental health providers and the community, families and children see them not simply as forces of order charged with enforcing the law, but as trusted advocates concerned about their safety." The COPS office has underscored the importance of officers' being trained in juvenile mental-health issues.

7. **Emphasize the 'R' (Resource) in "SRO": Develop community resource lists to support diversion and treatment**

Police departments and school systems should work with school-based mental health counselors, local stakeholders, experts in the field, and other community members to develop a resource guide of local organizations that can provide alternatives to punitive responses where in-school resources are not available. The guide should include information about the population(s) served by each organization, the accessibility of the program/services (as determined by location, hours of operation, and/or cost), and other elements relevant to girls of color

8. **Train educators on the limits of SRO Activity and how to effectively handle disciplinary issues without police involvement**

SROs who participated in our research stated that educators routinely request their involvement in discipline-related matters. To minimize conflation of roles, teachers should be trained to improve their response to non-criminal incidents without officer involvement. Implementing such skills can, in turn, create safer learning spaces. Educators should also recognize that SROs' roles are limited to criminal law enforcement, as reflected in the terms of MOUs as suggested in Principle 1, and learn to distinguish the rare circumstances in which unlawful student behavior necessitates officer involvement.

9. **Create opportunities for positive non-enforcement interactions among police, girls of color, and the community**

On-duty opportunities for SROs to spend time with students can build stronger, more positive relationships based on mutual understanding and respect. NASRO recommends this kind of involvement with students. Some of these informal interactions should include meetings that are specifically focused on allowing girls of color to provide their perspectives on interactions with SROs. Parents and members of the community should be invited to some of these meetings to increase mutual understanding and broaden sources of input. To maximize inclusivity of girls of color, girls should be consulted to determine the most accessible venue and subject matter that is of greatest interest to them.

Appendix C: Recommendations from Task Force on 21st Century Policing

The following is taken from *Pillar 4: Community Policing & Crime Reduction, Section 6.* The full report of task force recommendations can be found at https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/taskforce/taskforce_finalreport.pdf

RECOMMENDATION: Communities should adopt policies and programs that address the needs of children and youth most at risk for crime or violence and reduce aggressive law enforcement tactics that stigmatize youth and marginalize their participation in schools and communities.

The past decade has seen an explosion of knowledge about adolescent development and the neurological underpinnings of adolescent behavior. Much has also been learned about the pathways by which adolescents become delinquent, the effectiveness of prevention and treatment programs, and the long-term effects of transferring youths to the adult system and confining them in harsh conditions. These findings have raised doubts about a series of policies and practices of "zero tolerance" that have contributed to increasing the school-to-prison pipeline by criminalizing the behaviors of children as young as kindergarten age. Noncriminal offenses can escalate to criminal charges when officers are not trained in child and adolescent development and are unable to recognize and manage a child's emotional, intellectual, and physical development issues. School district policies and practices that push students out of schools and into the juvenile justice system cause great harm and do no good.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. Education and criminal justice agencies at all levels of government should work together to reform policies and procedures that push children into the juvenile justice system.

2. In order to keep youth in school and to keep them from criminal and violent behavior, law enforcement agencies should work with schools to encourage the creation of alternatives to student suspensions and expulsion through restorative justice, diversion, counseling, and family interventions.

3. Law enforcement agencies should work with schools to encourage the use of alternative strategies that involve youth in decision making, such as restorative justice, youth courts, and peer interventions.

4. Law enforcement agencies should work with schools to adopt an instructional approach to discipline that uses interventions or disciplinary consequences to help students develop new behavior skills and positive strategies to avoid conflict, redirect energy, and refocus on learning.

5. Law enforcement agencies should work with schools to develop and monitor school discipline policies with input and collaboration from school personnel, students, families, and community members. These policies should prohibit the use of corporal punishment and electronic control devices.

6. Law enforcement agencies should work with schools to create a continuum of developmentally appropriate and proportional consequences for addressing ongoing and escalating student misbehavior after all appropriate interventions have been attempted.

7. Law enforcement agencies should work with communities to play a role in programs and procedures to reintegrate juveniles back into their communities as they leave the juvenile justice system.

8. Law enforcement agencies and schools should establish memoranda of agreement for the placement of School Resource Officers that limit police involvement in student discipline. Such agreements could include provisions for special training for School Resource Officers to help them better understand and deal with issues involving youth.

9. The Federal Government should assess and evaluate zero tolerance strategies and examine the role of reasonable discretion when dealing with adolescents in consideration of their stages of maturation or development.

Appendix D: Model Memorandum of Understanding

As part of broader criminal justice reform efforts in Massachusetts in 2018, the Attorney General released the following MOU, which was developed by a multidisciplinary team of experts, to be adopted by all SRO programs in the state. The model MOU describes the process for selecting the SRO, the roles of the SRO and school administrators in responding to student misbehavior, information sharing between the SRO and school personnel, and SRO training requirements. The MOU includes provisions to help ensure compliance with several preexisting laws, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The MOU ensures that SROs do not take the place of appointed school disciplinarians, enforcers of school regulations, or school-based mental health providers, and that police powers will not be used to address traditional school discipline issues, including non-violent disruptive behavior, and restricts law enforcement action in response to certain school-based offenses. The MOU can be downloaded here: **https://www. mass.gov/doc/sro-mou-final-9-5-18**.

Memorandum of Understanding
between _____ Public Schools and _____ Police Department

This agreement (the "Agreement") is made by and between _____ [*insert name of public school district or charter school*] (the "District") and _____ Police Department (the "Police Department") (collectively, the "Parties"). The Chief of Police of the Police Department (the "Chief") and the Superintendent of the District [*or, in the case of charter schools*: the head of the school] ("the Superintendent") are each a signatory to this Agreement. The provisions of this Agreement in **bold typeface** are specifically required by law under G.L. c. 71, § 37P.

    I.   **Purpose**

The purpose of this Agreement is to formalize and clarify the partnership between the District and the Police Department to implement a School Resource Officer ("SRO") program (the "Program") [*identify particular school name if relevant*: at _____ School (the "School")] in order to promote school safety; help maintain a positive school climate for all students, families, and staff; enhance cultural understanding between students and law enforcement; promote school participation and completion by students; facilitate appropriate information-sharing; and inform the Parties' collaborative relationship to best serve the school community.

This memorandum is not intended to, does not, and may not be relied upon to create any rights, substantive or procedural, enforceable by any person in any civil or criminal matter.

    II.   **Mission Statement, Goals, and Objectives**

The mission of the Program is to support and foster the safe and healthy development of all students in the District [*or at the School*] through strategic and appropriate use of law enforcement resources and with the mutual understanding that school participation and completion is indispensable to achieving positive outcomes for youth and public safety.

The Parties are guided by the following goals and objectives (the "Goals and Objectives"):

- To foster a safe and supportive school environment that allows all students to learn and flourish regardless of race, religion, national origin, immigration status, gender, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, and socioeconomic status;
- To promote a strong partnership and lines of communication between school and police personnel and clearly delineate their roles and responsibilities;
- To establish a framework for principled conversation and decision-making by school and police personnel regarding student misbehavior and students in need of services;
- To ensure that school personnel and SROs have clearly defined roles in responding to student misbehavior and that school administrators are responsible for code of conduct and routine disciplinary violations;
- To minimize the number of students unnecessarily out of the classroom, arrested at school, or court-involved;
- To encourage relationship building by the SRO such that students and community members see the SRO as a facilitator of needed supports as well as a source of protection;
- To provide requirements and guidance for training including SRO training required by law and consistent with best practices, and training for school personnel as to when it is appropriate to request SRO intervention;
- To outline processes for initiatives that involve the SRO and school personnel, such as violence prevention and intervention and emergency management planning; and
- To offer presentations and programming to the school focusing on criminal justice issues, community and relationship building, and prevention, health, and safety topics.

III.   Structure and Governance

The Parties acknowledge the importance of clear structures and governance for the Program. The Parties agree that communicating these structures to the school community, including teachers and other school staff, students, and families, is important to the success of the Program.

A. Process for Selecting SRO

The Parties acknowledge that the selection of the SRO is a critical aspect of the Program and that it is important for the Parties and the school community to have a positive perception of and relationship with the SRO.

In accordance with state law, the Chief shall assign an officer whom the Chief believes would foster an optimal learning environment and educational community and shall give preference to officers who demonstrate the requisite personality and character to work in a school environment with children and educators and who have received specialized training in child and adolescent cognitive development, de-escalation techniques, and alternatives to arrest and diversion strategies. The Chief shall work collaboratively with the Superintendent in identifying officers who meet these criteria and in selecting the officer who is ultimately assigned as the SRO. [Note: *regional school districts should tailor this paragraph to specify how chiefs of different towns should work together, and with the Superintendent, to select the SRO).*]

The Chief shall consider the following additional factors in the selection of the SRO:

- Proven experience working effectively with youth;
- Demonstrated ability to work successfully with a population that has a similar racial and ethnic makeup and language background as those prevalent in the student body, as well as with persons who have physical and mental disabilities;

- Demonstrated commitment to making students and school community members of all backgrounds feel welcomed and respected;
- Demonstrated commitment to de-escalation, diversion, and/or restorative justice, and an understanding of crime prevention, problem-solving, and community policing in a school setting;
- Knowledge of school-based legal issues (e.g., confidentiality, consent), and demonstrated commitment to protecting students' legal and civil rights;
- Knowledge of school safety planning and technology;
- Demonstrated commitment and ability to engage in outreach to the community;
- Knowledge of school and community resources;
- A record of good judgment and applied discretion, including an absence of validated complaints and lawsuits; and
- Public speaking and teaching skills.

In endeavoring to assign an SRO who is compatible with the school community, the Chief shall receive and consider input gathered by the Superintendent from the school principal(s) and representative groups of teachers, parents, and students, in addition to the Superintendent. **In accordance with state law, the Chief shall not assign an SRO based solely on seniority.**

The Chief shall take into account actual or apparent conflicts of interest, including whether an officer is related to a current student at the school to which the officer may be assigned as an SRO. As part of the application process, officers who are candidates for an SRO position shall be required to notify the Chief about any relationships with current students or staff members or students or staff members who are expected to join the school community (e.g., children who are expected to attend the school in the coming years). Any SRO who has a familial or other relationship with a student or staff member that might constitute an actual or apparent conflict of interest shall be required to notify his or her appointing authority at the earliest opportunity. The Police Department shall determine the appropriate course of action, including whether to assign another officer to respond to a particular situation, and will advise the SRO and the District accordingly. Nothing in this paragraph is intended to limit the ability of the SRO to respond to emergency situations in District schools.

B. **Supervision of SRO and Chain of Command**

The SRO shall be a member of the Police Department and report directly to _____ [*identify Police Department supervisor by position*]. [*Or in cases in which the District has a police force which reports to the Superintendent*: The SRO shall be designated as a special employee of the District and shall report directly to _____ [*identify school or District supervisor by position*]]. To ensure clear and consistent lines of communication, the SRO shall meet at least monthly with the principal and any other school officials identified in Section V.A. The SRO shall ensure that the principal remains aware of material interactions and information involving the SRO's work, including, but not limited to, arrests and searches of students' persons and property, consistent with Section V.D.

C. **Level and Type of Commitment from Police Department and School District**

The salary and benefits of the SRO shall be covered by _____ [*insert which party is responsible, or the percentages each party is responsible for*]. The costs of the training required by this Agreement and any other training or professional development shall be paid by _____ [*insert which party is responsible, or the percentages each party is responsible for*].

[*Insert which party is responsible for any other foreseeable costs, or the percentages each party is responsible for.*]

[*Insert a paragraph detailing what the District will make available to the SRO with respect to space and equipment, such as dedicated and secure office space for the SRO that allows the SRO to engage in confidential conversations, a desk, chairs, and access to any technology needs. Also specify what equipment the Police Department will provide.*]

D. **Integrating the SRO**

The Parties acknowledge that proper integration of the SRO can help build trust, relationships, and strong communication among the SRO, students, and school personnel.

The District shall be responsible for ensuring that the SRO is formally introduced to the school community, including students, parents, and staff. The introduction shall include information about the SRO's background and experience, the SRO's role and responsibilities, what situations are appropriate for SRO involvement, and how the SRO and the school community can work together, including how and when the SRO is available for meetings and how and when the school community can submit questions, comments, and constructive feedback about the SRO's work. The introduction for parents shall include information on procedures for communicating with the SRO in languages other than English. The SRO shall also initiate communications with students and teachers to learn their perceptions regarding the climate of their school.

The SRO shall regularly be invited to and attend staff meetings, assemblies, and other school convenings. The SRO shall also be invited to participate in educational and instructional activities, such as instruction on topics relevant to criminal justice and public safety issues. [NOTE: *Some districts might add working with community partners on campaigns and messages in schools (e.g., to prevent substance use, vaping, and distracted driving).*] If the District has access to a student rights training through a community partner or the District Attorney's Office, the school shall consider offering such a training to students, where practicable, at the start of each school year. The SRO shall make reasonable efforts to attend such training. The SRO shall not be utilized for support staffing, such as hall monitor, substitute teacher, or cafeteria duty.

The Parties acknowledge that the SRO may benefit from knowledge of accommodations or approaches that are required for students with mental health, behavioral, or emotional concerns who have an individualized education program ("IEP") under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or a plan under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act ("504 Plan"). School personnel shall notify parents or guardians of such students of the opportunity to offer the SRO access to the portions of the IEP document or 504 Plan that address these accommodations or approaches. It is within the sole discretion of the parents or guardians to decide whether to permit the SRO to review such documents. If a parent or guardian provides such permission, the SRO shall make reasonable efforts to review the documents. Whenever possible, the school shall make available a staff member who can assist the SRO in understanding such documents.

The SRO shall participate in any District and school-based emergency management planning. The SRO shall also participate in the work of any school threat assessment team to the extent any information sharing is consistent with obligations imposed by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") (20 U.S.C. § 1232g) (see further information in Section V).

E. **Complaint Resolution Process**

The Parties shall develop and implement a simple and objective complaint resolution system for all members of the school community to register concerns that may arise with respect to the SRO or the Program. The system shall comply with Police Department policies and shall provide for timely communication of the resolution of the complaint to the complainant. The system shall also allow parents and guardians to submit complaints in their preferred language and in a confidential manner that protects the identity of the complainant from the SRO consistent with the SRO's due process rights and any applicable employment protections.

All students, parents, guardians, teachers, and administrators shall be informed of the complaint resolution system and procedures at the beginning of each school year.

The Parties shall develop and implement a system that allows for the SRO and other Police Department officers to register concerns, including concerns about misconduct by teachers or administrators, that may arise with respect to the Program.

F. **Annual Review of the SRO and the SRO Program**

In accordance with state law, the Chief and the Superintendent shall annually review the performance of the SRO and the success and effectiveness of the Program in meeting the Goals and Objectives. [NOTE: *Some programs may wish to have more frequent reviews.*] The review shall be conducted at the end of each school year in a meeting among the SRO, the Chief, and the Superintendent. A copy of the review shall be supplied to each attendee.

The Chief and Superintendent shall jointly develop and agree in advance on the metrics for measuring the SRO's performance and the success and effectiveness of the Program. The review shall include measures that reward the SRO's performance, subject to the terms of any applicable collective bargaining agreements, for compliance with the terms of this Agreement and the SRO's contributions to achieving the mission, purpose, goals, and objectives as set forth in Sections I and II. The review shall consider SRO efforts to prevent unnecessary student arrests, citations, court referrals, and other use of police authority. The review shall also assess the extent of the SRO's positive interactions with students, families, and staff and the SRO's participation in collaborative approaches to problem-solving, prevention, and de-escalation.

The Chief and Superintendent shall provide a mechanism for receiving feedback from the school community, including principal(s), teachers, students, and families of the school(s) to which the SRO is assigned. The Chief shall seriously consider any such feedback and shall make a good faith effort to address any concerns raised; however, the final selection and assignment of the SRO shall be within the sole discretion of the Chief. If the Superintendent recommends that the SRO not be assigned to a specific school, the Chief shall provide an explanation of any decision to maintain the SRO's assignment.

IV. **Roles and Responsibilities of the SRO and School Administrators and Staff in Student Misbehavior**

The Parties agree that school officials and the SRO play important and distinct roles in responding to student misbehavior to ensure school safety and promote a positive and supportive learning environment for all students.

Under state law, the SRO shall not serve as a school disciplinarian, as an enforcer of school regulations, or in place of school-based mental health providers, and the SRO shall not use police powers to address

traditional school discipline issues, including non-violent disruptive behavior.

The principal or his or her designee shall be responsible for student code of conduct violations and routine disciplinary violations. The SRO shall be responsible for investigating and responding to criminal misconduct. The Parties acknowledge that many acts of student misbehavior that may contain all the necessary elements of a criminal offense are best handled through the school's disciplinary process. The SRO shall read and understand the student code of conduct for both the District and the school.

The principal (or his or her designee) and the SRO shall use their reasoned professional judgment and discretion to determine whether SRO involvement is appropriate for addressing student misbehavior. In such instances, the guiding principle is whether misbehavior rises to the level of criminal conduct that poses (1) real and substantial harm or threat of harm to the physical or psychological well-being of other students, school personnel, or members of the community or (2) real and substantial harm or threat of harm to the property of the school.

In instances of student misbehavior that do not require a law enforcement response, the principal or his or her designee shall determine the appropriate disciplinary response. The principal or his or her designee should prioritize school- or community-based accountability programs and services, such as peer mediation, restorative justice, and mental health resources, whenever possible.

For student misbehavior that requires immediate intervention to maintain safety (whether or not the misbehavior involves criminal conduct), the SRO may act to deescalate the immediate situation and to protect the physical safety of members of the school community. To this end, school personnel may request the presence of the SRO when they have a reasonable fear for their safety or the safety of students or other personnel.

When the SRO or other Police Department employees have opened a criminal investigation, school personnel shall not interfere with such investigation or act as agents of law enforcement. To protect their roles as educators, school personnel shall only assist in a criminal investigation as witnesses or to otherwise share information consistent with Section V, except in cases of emergency. Nothing in this paragraph shall preclude the principal or his or her designee from undertaking parallel disciplinary or administrative measures that do not interfere with a criminal investigation.

A student shall only be arrested on school property or at a school-related event as a last resort or when a warrant requires such an arrest. The principal or his or her designee shall be consulted prior to an arrest whenever practicable, and the student's parent or guardian shall be notified as soon as practicable after an arrest. In the event of an investigation by the SRO that leads to custodial questioning of a juvenile student, the SRO shall notify the student's parent or guardian in advance and offer them the opportunity to be present during the interview.

In accordance with state law, the SRO shall not take enforcement action against students for Disturbing a School Assembly (G.L. c. 272, § 40) or for Disorderly Conduct or Disturbing the Peace (G.L. c. 272, § 53) within school buildings, on school grounds, or in the course of school-related events.

It shall be the responsibility of the District to make teachers and other school staff aware of the distinct roles of school administration and SROs in addressing student misbehavior, consistent with this Section and this Agreement, as well as the Standard Operating Procedures accompanying this Agreement and described in Section VIII.

V. **Information Sharing Between SROs, School Administrators and Staff, and Other Stakeholders**

The Parties acknowledge the benefit of appropriate information sharing for improving the health and safety of students but also the importance of limits on the sharing of certain types of student information by school personnel. The Parties also acknowledge that there is a distinction between student information

shared for law enforcement purposes and student information shared to support students and connect them with necessary mental health, community-based, and related services.

A. Points of Contact for Sharing Student Information

In order to facilitate prompt and clear communications, the Parties acknowledge that the principal (or his or her designee) and the SRO are the primary points of contact for sharing student information in accordance with this Agreement. The Parties also acknowledge that, in some instances, other school officials or Police Department employees may serve as key points of contact for sharing information. Such school officials and Police Department employees are identified below [*identify by title, not name*]:

_____

_____

_____

Such Police Department employees are considered a part of the District's "Law Enforcement Unit" as defined in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") (20 U.S.C. § 1232g).

B. Compliance with FERPA and Other Confidentiality Requirements

At all times, school officials must comply with FERPA. This federal statute permits disclosures of personally identifiable information about students contained in educational records ("Student PII"), without consent, only under specific circumstances.

When the District "has outsourced institutional services or functions" to the SRO consistent with 34 C.F.R. § 99.31(a)(1)(i)(B) of FERPA, the SRO qualifies as a "school official" who can access, without consent, Student PII contained in education records about which the SRO has a "legitimate educational interest."

Consistent with 34 C.F.R. §§ 99.31(10) and 99.36 of FERPA, the SRO (or other Police Department employee identified in Section V.A.) may gain access, without consent, to Student PII contained in education records "in connection with an emergency if knowledge of the [Student PII] is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals."

These are the *only* circumstances in which an SRO may gain access, without consent, to education records containing student PII (such as IEPs, disciplinary documentation created by a school, or work samples).

FERPA does <u>not</u> apply to communications or conversations about what school staff have observed or to information derived from sources other than education records.

In addition to FERPA, the Parties agree to comply with all other state and federal laws and regulations regarding confidentiality, including the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) and state student record regulations at 603 C.M.R. 23.00. The Parties agree to collect only that student information necessary and relevant to fulfilling their respective roles, to share such information with each other only where required or allowed under this Agreement, and not to share such information beyond the sharing contemplated in this Agreement unless required to be shared by state or federal law. The Parties shall not collect or share information on a student's immigration status except as required by law.

C. **Information Sharing by School Personnel**

1. **For Law Enforcement Purposes**

Where the principal or his or her designee learns of misconduct by a student for which a law enforcement response may be appropriate (as described in Section IV), he or she should inform the SRO. If a teacher has information related to such misconduct, he or she may communicate this information directly to the SRO but should also communicate such information to the principal or his or her designee. The Parties agree that the sharing of such information shall not and should not necessarily require a law enforcement response on the part of the SRO but shall and should instead prompt a careful consideration of whether the misconduct is best addressed by law enforcement action, by a school disciplinary response, or by some combination of the two.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, if student information is obtained solely during a communication with school staff deemed privileged or confidential due to the staff member's professional licensure, such communication shall only be disclosed with proper consent or if the communication is subject to the limits and exceptions to confidentiality and is required to be disclosed (e.g., mandatory reporting, immediate threats of harm to self or others). Additionally, if such student information is gathered as part of a "Verbal Screening Tool for Substance Abuse Disorders," such information shall only be disclosed pursuant to the requirements of G.L. c. 71, § 97.

The Parties acknowledge that there may be circumstances in which parents consent to the disclosure of student information for law enforcement purposes (e.g., as part of a diversion program agreement) and that the sharing of information under such circumstances does not violate this Agreement.

The Parties also acknowledge that, from time to time, an emergency situation may arise that poses a real, substantial, and immediate threat to human safety or to property with the risk of substantial damage. School personnel having knowledge of any such emergency situation should immediately notify or cause to be notified both the Police Department (or the SRO if appropriate to facilitate a response) and the principal or his or her designee. This requirement is in addition to any procedures outlined in the school's student handbook, administrative manual, and/or School Committee policy manual.

Nothing in this section or this Agreement shall prevent the principal or his or her designee from reporting possible criminal conduct by a person who is not a student.

2. **For Non-Law Enforcement Purposes**

Based on their integration as part of the school community, SROs may periodically require access to student information for purposes that fall outside of the SRO's law enforcement role outlined in Section IV.

Student PII received by the SRO (or other Police Department employee identified in Section V.A.) that is not related to criminal conduct risking or causing substantial harm shall not be used to take law enforcement action against a student but may be used to connect a student or family with services or other supports. Prior to such a disclosure, whenever possible, the principal or his or her designee shall notify the parent, the student, or both, when such information will be shared with the SRO.

D. **Information Sharing by the SRO**

Subject to applicable statutes and regulations governing confidentiality, the SRO shall inform the principal or his or her designee of any arrest of a student, the issuance of a criminal or delinquency complaint application against a student, or a student's voluntary participation in any diversion or restorative justice program if:

- The activity involves criminal conduct that poses a (present or future) threat of harm to the physical or psychological well-being of the student, other students or school personnel, or to school property;
- The making of such a report would facilitate supportive intervention by school personnel on behalf of the student (e.g., because of the Police Department's involvement with a student's family, the student may need or benefit from supportive services in school); or
- The activity involves actual or possible truancy.

The SRO shall provide such information whether the activity takes place in or out of school, consistent with the requirements of G.L. c. 12, § 32 (Community Based Justice information-sharing programs) and G.L. c. 71, § 37H (setting forth potential disciplinary consequences for violations of criminal law).

When the SRO observes or learns of student misconduct in school for which a law enforcement response is appropriate (as described in Section IV), the SRO shall convey to the principal or his or her designee as soon as reasonably possible the fact of that misconduct and the nature of the intended law enforcement response, and when the SRO observes or learns of student misconduct that does not merit a law enforcement response, but that appears to violate school rules, the SRO shall report the misconduct whenever such reporting would be required for school personnel.

VI.   **Data Collection and Reporting**

In accordance with state law, the SRO and school administrators shall work together to ensure the proper collection and reporting of data on school-based arrests, citations, and court referrals of students, consistent with regulations promulgated by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

[NOTE: *You might consider tracking other data, such as number and types of crimes committed at schools, substantiated complaints related to the SRO or the Program, types of community-building activities carried out by the SRO, and number of counseling, mentoring, and related activities by the SRO. Consider measures that will help the Chief, Superintendent, and school community evaluate the performance of the SRO and the success and effectiveness of the SRO program.*]

VII.   **SRO Training**

In accordance with state law, the SRO shall receive ongoing professional development in:

(1) child and adolescent development,
(2) conflict resolution, and
(3) diversion strategies.

Additional areas for continuing professional development may include, but are not limited to:

- Restorative practices
- Implicit bias and disproportionality in school-based arrests based on race and disability
- Cultural competency in religious practices, clothing preferences, identity, and other areas
- Mental health protocols and trauma-informed care
- De-escalation skills and positive behavior interventions and supports
- Training in proper policies, procedures, and techniques for the use of restraint
- Teen dating violence and healthy teen relationships
- Understanding and protecting civil rights in schools
- Special education law
- Student privacy protections and laws governing the release of student information
- School-specific approaches to topics like bullying prevention, cyber safety, emergency management and crisis response, threat assessment, and social-emotional learning

The SRO shall also receive certified basic SRO training on how to mentor and counsel students, work collaboratively with administrators and staff, adhere to ethical standards around interactions with students and others, manage time in a school environment, and comply with juvenile justice and privacy laws, to the extent that such training is available.

The SRO shall attend a minimum of _____ [*identify number of hour*] hours of training per year. [*The recommended minimum above time spent in certified basic SRO training is 12 hours.*]

Where practicable, the District shall also encourage school administrators working with SROs to undergo training alongside SROs to enhance their understanding of the SRO's role and the issues encountered by the SRO.

VIII.   **Accompanying Standard Operating Procedures**

This Agreement shall be accompanied by Standing Operating Procedures that shall be consistent with this Agreement and shall include, at a minimum, provisions detailing:

- **The SRO uniform** and any other ways of identifying as a police officer;
- Duty hours and scheduling for the SRO;
- **Use of police force, arrest, citation, and court referral on school property**;
- **A statement and description of students' legal rights, including the process for searching and questioning students and when parents and administrators must be notified and present**;
- **The chain of command, including delineating to whom the SRO reports**, how often the SRO meets with the principal or his or her designee, **and how school administrators and the SRO work together**, as well as what procedure will be followed when there is a disagreement between the administrator and the SRO;
- Protocols for SROs when school administrators, teachers, or other school personnel call upon them to intervene in situations beyond the role prescribed for them in Section IV;
- **Performance evaluation standards, which shall incorporate monitoring compliance with this Agreement and use of arrest, citation, and police force in school**;
- **Protocols for diverting and referring at-risk students to school- and community-based supports and providers**; and
- Clear guidelines on confidentiality and **information sharing between the SRO, school staff, and parents or guardians**.

IX. Effective Date, Duration, and Modification of Agreement

This Agreement shall be effective as of the date of signing.

This Agreement shall be reviewed annually prior to the start of the school year. This Agreement remains in full force and effect until amended or until such time as either of the Parties withdraws from this Agreement by delivering written notification to the other Party.

Upon execution of this Agreement by the Parties, a copy of the Agreement shall be placed on file in the offices of the Chief and the Superintendent. The Parties shall also share copies of this Agreement with the SRO, any principals in schools where the SRO will work, and any other individuals whom they deem relevant or who request it.

Name: _____ **Name:** _____

Superintendent of Schools *Chief of Police*

Date: _____ **Date:** _____

Appendix E: Survey Instrument

The following survey tool was disseminated to SROs, and the same questions were adapted for school district administrators.

Informed Consent

The purpose of this survey is to learn about the roles currently encompassed by school resource officers in Maine. The Muskie School at the University of Southern Maine has been asked to conduct this survey to learn about:

1. What various roles and functions SROs perform in Maine schools,
2. What MOAs exist between local law enforcement agencies and the schools they work in, and how these agreements govern what roles SROs play, and
3. What types of training are required and/or offered to SROs in Maine.

This survey is voluntary and you may choose to answer all, some, or none of the questions. The information gathered from this survey is intended to provide a baseline of current practice, and your responses will not jeopardize your job or be used against you. Please answer the questions based on your experience.

Responses are confidential, though not anonymous so that follow-up communication will only be sent to anyone who has not responded over the next 4 or 5 days. No individuals or individual responses will be identified in the reported findings, only general findings will be reported at the Statewide SRO Summit in August 2018 and will be available to all stakeholders.

The survey should only take about 5 minutes to complete. **NOTE: If completing on a phone, please use the horizontal position for best results.**

If you have any questions, please contact Danielle Layton at danielle.layton@maine.edu or 207-228-8096. If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject, please contact the USM Research Compliance Administrator at usmorio@maine.edu or 207-228-8434.

Q1 How long have you held this position?

☐ Less than one year   ☐ 1-2 years

☐ 3-5 years   ☐ More than 5 years

Q2 If the SRO position rotates in your department, how long does each rotation last?

☐ Every year a new officer rotates into the SRO position

☐ Every other year a new officer rotates into the SRO position

☐ Every 4 years a new officer rotates into the SRO position

☐ This position does not rotate

☐ Other period of rotation (Please explain)

Q3 What environments do you work in?

	Full-time	Most of the time	Regular drop-ins	As-needed drop-ins	During school vacations
High school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Middle school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Elementary school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Non-school-based police work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other (Please specify)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q4 Does your department have a memorandum of agreement (MOA) with the school(s) where you work?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure

Q5 Who was involved in crafting the MOA and/or signed the MOA? Please check all that apply.

☐ District superintendent / assistant superintendent

☐ School principal / assistant principal

☐ School social worker

☐ School guidance counselor

☐ Police chief

☐ Other law enforcement officers

☐ School board member

☐ Attorney

☐ Not sure

☐ Other consultants Please specify:

Q6 How often do the following roles factor into your position?

	Daily	1-2 times a week	1-2 times a month	1-2 times a semester	1-2 times a year	Never
Investigating criminal activity on campus	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Teaching classes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Daily	1-2 times a week	1-2 times a month	1-2 times a semester	1-2 times a year	Never
Student discipline (non- criminal)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Building positive relationships with students	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Informal counseling	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mediating conflicts between students	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Monitoring school grounds	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Building safety assessments	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Training school staff	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Developing/training on threat responses	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Relationship building with other stakeholders	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other Please specify:	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

How often do you interact with students in the following capacities?

	Daily	1-2 times a week	1-2 times a month	1-2 times a semester	1-2 times a year	Never
One-on-one mentoring	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Small group mediation / conflict resolution	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Relationship building in common areas (i.e. hanging out in the cafeteria)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Teaching classes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Investigation work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Patrolling buildings/grounds ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Other (Please specify) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Q8 How often do you work with the following stakeholders?

	Daily	1-2 times a week	1-2 times a month	1-2 times a semester	1-2 times a year	Never
Superintendent/Assistant Superintendent	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Principal/Assistant Principal	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Police Chief	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Teachers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Guidance counselors	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
School social workers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Juvenile probation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Diversion programs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
DHHS	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Parents	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Students	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Local prosecutors	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Restorative justice practitioners	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other (Please specify)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q9   Who determines what roles you play in your position? Please check all that apply.

☐ It's specified in the MOA between the police department and school

☐ My supervisor (law enforcement) / Police Chief

☐ The district superintendent

☐ The school principal

☐ The roles are determined by the SRO

☐ Other (Please specify)

Q10   When there are conflicting priorities between the police department and the school or district, how is it resolved?

☐ The police department has the final say

☐ The school or district has the final say

☐ The school/district and police department set a meeting to discuss

☐ The SRO decides the outcome

☐ Other (Please specify)

Q11   When there are conflicting priorities, how effective is the decision-making process in producing satisfactory resolutions for all stakeholders?

☐ Very effective   ☐ Somewhat effective

☐ Not so effective   ☐ Not at all effective

Q12 How is the SRO position funded in your department?

☐ Fully funded by the police department

☐ Mostly funded by the police department, partly funded by the school department

☐ Equally shared by the police and school department

☐ Mostly funded by the school department, partly funded by the police department

☐ Other (Please specify)

Q13 In your own perspective, rank the **top five** priorities for officers on school campuses. Please rank order **five** items 1-5, where 1 is the highest priority and 5 is the lowest priority.

Dealing with active shooter situations or other safety emergencies _____

Investigating criminal activity _____

Aiding with non-criminal student discipline _____

De-escalating and mediating conflicts _____

Teaching classes _____

Training school staff _____

Building positive relationships with students _____

Counseling students _____

Assessing building safety _____

Monitoring school grounds _____

Q14   What else would you like to share regarding your role as an officer based in school settings?

Q15   Are there training requirements outlined in the MOA between your school and department?

☐ Yes   ☐ No   ☐ Not sure

Q16   What training is required before taking on the SRO position?

☐ No additional training beyond basic police academy training

☐ 1-week SRO Basic Training

☐ Nonviolent Crisis Intervention Training

☐ Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

☐ NASRO Training I

☐ NASRO Training II

☐ Physical building safety

☐ Training in a particular active threat response model

☐ Not sure

☐ Other (Please specify)

Q17   What continuing training is required to hold the SRO position?

Q18   How geographically accessible are training offerings relevant to your position? Please check all that apply.

☐ At least once a year, I access an online training that is relevant to my position as an SRO

☐ At least once a year, I travel in-state to a training relevant to my position as an SRO

☐ At least once a year, I travel out-of-state to a training relevant to my position as an SRO

☐ I have not been able to go to any trainings relevant to my position as an SRO because they require travel

☐ I am not aware of training opportunities relevant to my position as an SRO

Q19   Training expenses are covered by

☐ The school

☐ The police department

☐ Shared between school and police department

☐ Training is not subsidized

☐ Other (Please specify)

Q20   What training opportunities would you like to see offered for SROs in Maine?

Q21   Would you be interested in an SRO association in Maine that facilitated shared training opportunities and information dissemination?

☐ Yes   ☐No

Thank you for your time in responding to this survey! Please hit submit when you have finished.

Appendix F: Group Interview Instrument

Informed Consent Script

USM's Muskie School is conducting a study on school-based policing in Maine. This research is being funded by the Juvenile Justice Advisory Group with the intention that the findings, along with technical assistance from national experts, will inform and improve implementation of Maine's SRO program. To learn about how schools and law enforcement collaborate to promote school safety, Muskie School researchers are facilitating group interviews with key stakeholders.

Concurrent with group interviews, this study involves collecting disciplinary data from the Maine Department of Education, school codes of conduct, and memoranda of agreement (MOAs) from educators and law enforcement professionals in multiple sites across Maine. The information collected will be used to better understand how school and law enforcement professionals in various jurisdictions handle school behavioral incidents. We have requested some of these items in advance of this group interview in order to have a productive discussion about the policies, procedures, and partnerships that enable you to perform your role.

Participation is completely voluntary and participants will not be identified in any reported findings. All qualitative information collected and reported will be aggregated and deidentified. However, because this is a group discussion, the information you share is shared with the group. While the interview does include hypothetical scenarios, we will not ask for any information that would compromise student privacy. Please do not share any student information in your responses, and if responses move in that direction, we will interrupt just to remind you to keep student information private. We are looking specifically at policies and procedures that govern how student discipline and law enforcement involvement are handled in the school setting you work in. When you describe scenarios to illustrate your processes, please remember not to share any details that could identify any students.

Data gathered from this study will inform a report and recommendations for Maine's school-based policing program. The discussion should take approximately 75 – 90 minutes. Do you have any questions before we get started?

1. Thinking about the student conduct and disciplinary policy for your school, how many times are teachers expected to handle incidents prior to a referral to an administrator?

2. How does your school clearly delineate between which matters should be addressed with a school response versus a law enforcement response?

   a. What are some examples of if, how, and when the SRO is involved in school discipline. How are SROs permitted to use their discretion in carrying out their job?

3. What factors play into the decision to bring the SRO into a situation?

4. Thinking about the most common types of incidents that you have to respond to, walk us through the intervention and decision-making process, from initial involvement to resolution and documentation (*e.g. phone call or letter home, social worker/counselor to assess family issues, behavioral contract with student, restorative process, detention, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, expulsion, diversion/referral to community program, call law enforcement, etc*).

   a. What type of school-based diversion program do you have available to you when you are working with students who have violated the school's code of conduct or the law?

   b. How do you feel about diversion as one of your roles/objectives?

   c. How is that diversion role guided by policy in your MOA?

d. How do you coordinate with community partners so that you know who to refer a student to for support and keep them out of justice involvement?

5. When the SRO becomes involved in a situation, what data are collected on decisions/resolutions?

    a. How does the SROs document what they do in their various roles?

    b. Does the SRO measure referrals to diversion programs?

    b. Are there standard tools the SRO uses to report their activities?

    c. How are these data used?

6. Describe the types of specific training you have received relevant to your role as an SRO (*e.g. adolescent development, working with special/vulnerable populations, Educational and Family Privacy Act, Positive Behavioral Interventions Supports (PBIS)*)?

    a. What additional training do SROs need to have to perform their jobs at the highest level?

    b. What training do all school staff need on the role of the SRO in order to partner effectively with them?

7. What do you think are the strengths of the SRO model that you are practicing with?

    a. What could enhance the model as it is being practiced in your area?

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The Cutler Institute for Health and Social Policy at the Muskie School of Public Service is dedicated to developing innovative, evidence-informed, and practical approaches to pressing health and social challenges faced by individuals, families, and communities

Juvenile Justice Advisory Group

"The mission of the Maine Juvenile Justice Advisory Group is to advise and make recommendations to state policy makers and to promote effective system level responses that further the goals of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act"

Maine is an active participant in the national juvenile justice initiative, which aims to help states craft effective responses to the problems of juvenile crime and violence. As part of this initiative, Maine receives funds to improve its juvenile justice system. The JJAG's priorities are to promote effective, system level responses that further the goals of the Juvenile Justice Delinquency Act; to promote the development of gender specific services for Maine's juvenile justice system; to ensure that youth are not detained for lack of appropriate alternatives; to reduce delinquency and youth violence by providing community members with skills, knowledge, and opportunities to foster a healthy and nurturing environment that supports the growth and development of productive and responsible citizens; to provide information and training to legislators, juvenile justice professionals, and the general public to benefit youth and all those involved with Maine's juvenile justice system; and to maintain compliance with the core requirements of the JJDP Act and to monitor the compliance of JJAG grantees..